

Common Ground

We Are Not Born Civilized

John Benjamin Nichols

I GOT THE BLUES Alan Lomax

THE THINGS OF LIFE Beatrice Griffith

THE SPARTAN GREEKS OF BRIDGETOWN:

THE SECOND GENERATION J. Mayone Stycos

FAREWELL TO SICILY R. R. Aaronson

PAYDAY BLUES George Roth

THE NISEI IN JAPAN Roger Baldwin

HISTORY AS A RECORD AND A PROCESS

Louis Adamic

— *and others* —

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CONTENTS

TITLE	AUTHOR	PAGE
WE ARE NOT BORN CIVILIZED	John Benjamin Nichols	3
TRANSPLANTING	Toyo Suyemoto	10
FAREWELL TO SICILY	R. R. Aaronson	11
HISTORY AS A RECORD AND A PROCESS	Louis Adamic	20
THE NISEI IN JAPAN	Roger Baldwin	24
MISSOURI STUDENTS WANT PROGRESS IN RACE RELATIONS	William C. Harrison	29
THE EGG MAN	Jean Paradise	33
IMMIGRANT—BLUE GUM	Charlotte Miles	37
I GOT THE BLUES	Alan Lomax	38
NEW CITIZENS	Photographs	53
THE THINGS OF LIFE	Beatrice Griffith	61
RICE INSTEAD OF POTATO	Ferd Okada	68
THE SPARTAN GREEKS OF BRIDGETOWN: THE SECOND GENERATION	J. Mayone Stycos	72
PAYDAY BLUES	George Roth	87

DEPARTMENTS

The Press, 95

Round-Up, conducted by Carey McWilliams, 98

The Pursuit of Liberty, conducted by Milton R. Konvitz, 102

The Bookshelf, conducted by Henry C. Tracy, 105

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To further an appreciation of what each group has contributed to America, to uphold the freedom to be different, and to encourage the growth of an American culture which will be truly representative of all the elements that make up the American people.

To overcome intolerance and discrimination because of national origin, race, or creed.

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WE ARE NOT BORN CIVILIZED

JOHN BENJAMIN NICHOLS

RACIAL and religious antipathy is a powerful sentiment in human nature and the makeup of the human personality. To obtain a real understanding of the fundamental conditions responsible for it, it is necessary to make excursions into various fields of scientific knowledge—biology, anthropology, psychology, sociology, ethics. There is one fundamental line which divides the factors relating to human personality and ideology and to racial characteristics and racial feeling into two separate zones, one pertaining to qualities and traits inherited at birth, the other to the characteristics acquired in the social environment encountered during the lifetime after birth. On the one hand is heredity; on the other is culture or civilization. The sum of these two makes up the final completed personality and ideology of the matured members of society. Biology—physiology, anatomy, genetics—affords understanding of heredity, of the physical and psychic properties inherited at birth by human individuals of all races. Anthropology deals with the special characteristics of different peoples and races. Psychology elucidates the elements and action of the mind, and of personality, ideology, and individuality. Sociology is a vast field covering the multitudinous relations of individuals, groups, and races

with one another, their mutual interactions, the social, political, and economic factors involved, the development and establishment of the special interests of the various groups, and the like. Ethics attempts to formulate the principles of justice and morality which should guide the conduct of people with one another.

Some of the matters brought out from these various scientific fields may seem to involve minutiae technical and obscure; yet taken together they will unite and help provide a basis for the intelligent and effective understanding of racial characteristics and racial problems.

To begin with the genetics of the subject, it is an established tenet in biological science that characteristics acquired after birth are not transmitted through heredity to the offspring. The physical and psychic characteristics that make up the specific type of the organism, transmitted from the parents and inherited by the offspring, are carried along through the successive generations exclusively by the germ plasm, a continuous succession of special germ cells, a few hundred egg cells or ova in the human female, billions of sperm cells in the male. The various physical or bodily characteristics are supposed to be transmitted in ultramicroscopic elements called genes, incorporated

COMMON GROUND

in the germ cells and carried along in the chain of germ plasm by the continuing and successive division of those cells. In any individual the number of different kinds of genes, each carrying a special and different hereditary characteristic, must be very great, running to many thousands.

The germ plasm is segregated from the remainder of the body and vital processes in such a way that it is not affected or altered by the external or adventitious conditions to which living individuals are exposed in their lives after birth. There is no internal or cellular channel from the tissues of the body in general to the special germ cells by which acquired features can be conveyed to and incorporated in the latter. Thus it is that acquired characteristics are not absorbed into the stream of heredity carried by the germ plasm, and are not implanted in the germinal genes and so transmitted to offspring.

For example, the tails of mice might be cut off for any number of successive generations, and yet the infant mice would continue to be born with full-sized natural and normal tails. To produce a tailless breed of mice it would be necessary to extirpate the tail-producing genes from the germ cells; and amputation of the tails is an external operation incapable of affecting the internal germ plasm in any such way.

Like beads upon a string, the germ plasm at intervals produces a succession of living and sentient individual beings or organisms—our bodies. These beings are born, mature, and during their existence nourish and maintain the chain of germ cells, and then transmit that germ plasm to their offspring; and finally they die. Our bodies are ephemeral, transient, and mortal; but the germ plasm is undying and immortal. Although branches from the main germinal stem die off,

there is necessarily an unbroken continuity of living germ plasm from the beginning to the end of all life on the planet.

Offspring are in general produced closely true to an ancestral specific and morphologic psycho-physical type. Individual variations, however, occur; in fact are universal. The fortuitous and random joining of the thousands of genes presented in a double set from the two parents makes it mathematically inconceivable that (aside perhaps from identical twins) two human individuals could ever in all time be produced exactly alike. The variations ordinarily occurring are, however, comparatively of but slight or minor degree or importance, and not fundamental. For instance, differences in the color of the eyes are of no practical consequence; but it is a vital and imperative necessity that the complete functioning eyes be developed. By selective breeding and eugenics particular strains also can be purposely produced.

Heredity may also be varied by internal nutritional or toxic influences affecting the germ cells. Certain poisonous drugs, hormones, heat, and X-ray or other radioactive agencies may produce germinal changes, and are so employed for experimental or breeding purposes. Colchicine, for example, is a powerful poison much used experimentally, which perverts the process of ordinary germinal cell division and thus produces genetic alterations and mutations.

In addition to these adventitious and minor variations, "spontaneous" (so called in our ignorance) changes of significance and importance—called "mutations"—take place in the germ plasm, which alter the hereditary type of organism produced. These changes are exceedingly gradual, but continuous, in their operation, and they constitute the basis and mechanism of organic evolution. Over periods of mil-

WE ARE NOT BORN CIVILIZED

lions of years evolutionary processes have produced a vast variety and differentiation in organic life, from lowest to highest, with an innumerable multitude of diverse species, genera, and orders of organisms. The vital agencies and processes which have produced the changes or mutations in the germ plasm necessary for these evolutionary differentiations are an unsolved scientific mystery. Many of the evolutionary factors, the effect of which is to produce adaptation of the organism to its environment, are obscure; and it is to be noted that "natural selection" (though an important factor in evolution) does not produce germinal mutations but only determines which ones will survive. It requires thousands of generations for the natural evolutionary processes to produce material changes in the hereditary biological types; so that over the limited span of human existence and history the congenital type with which our lives have begun has to all human perception been uniform and unchanged.

During the embryonic and antenatal period of life, each being becomes endowed with its specific characteristics; these are psychic as well as physical—strong instincts and motivations, innate aptitudes and potentialities capable of development. All men are thus born in a state of natal primitivity, with a definite human type of organization, the outcome of evolutionary processes and congenitally determined in minor variations and particulars by the genetic forces in the ancestral germ plasms. It is often observed that human nature does not change through the ages, that it is the same now as it immemorially has been. That is strictly true with respect to the characteristics inherited at birth, which constitute so large a part of the matured and adult personality, since those congenital attributes conform closely to a fixed psy-

cho-physical type and fabric substantially unchanging over the course of human generations.

After birth the infant enters a new environment, a new field of physical and social relations and surroundings, vastly more extensive than that of its previous intra-uterine existence, in which the remainder of its life must be spent, and to and in which it must become conditioned, adjusted, and participate. In order to enable the individual to cope with and live and carry on in the physical and communal conditions of life, there is necessarily involved schooling and training (more or less purposive), experience, reaction and adaptation to the surroundings, and the acquisition of abilities and a culture and ideology adapted to whatever way of life he chances to enter. In this way the individual attains a cultivated and matured adult personality, made up partly of inherited and congenital characteristics, largely of attributes acquired postnatally from the educative social environment. As a general and comprehensive designation we can apply the term culture to the ensemble and totality of the qualities and faculties acquired in the postnatal environment.

The biological distinction between inherited and acquired characteristics is clear, important, and fundamental. It is the antithesis of heredity versus environment, antenatal versus postnatal development, nature versus nurture, substructure versus superstructure, natality versus maturity, birth versus culture. The inherited characteristics are passed on from germ cell to germ cell; the acquired cultural attributes are passed on from mature living beings to other living beings in a social atmosphere.

The important doctrine that postnatally acquired qualities do not become incorporated in the germ plasm and hereditary mechanism, and are not transmissible

to the offspring, is based not only on the negative anatomical structure, but also on the fact that the most intensive cultural elements acquired in the postnatal period, those most likely to be transmissible, are not congenitally reproduced in the offspring. For instance, there is no more deeply ingrained faculty acquired in the cultural life than language; yet no infant was ever born with the slightest trace of untaught facility in the use of the parental tongue. Craftsmanship and vocational skill is another intensively acquired faculty which does not spontaneously reappear in the untutored child. Each child must laboriously learn his language and craft from the beginning. While certain mental or occupational aptitudes and tendencies may reappear in different generations, these, if not due to similarity of early environmental influences, could arise from "spontaneous" changes in the germ plasm.

Fortunate would it be for humanity if desirable acquired characteristics—noble motives and moral principles, high abilities and intelligence, greater self-restraint—could be engrafted into heredity and so become transmissible to the offspring. That would be eugenics indeed, a great improvement in the native stock; mankind would start out in life on a higher plane.

The infantile and adolescent periods of life, however, exhibit a plasticity, pliability, and adaptability which have an important educational bearing. A large part of the elements that make up the personality are developed even within the restricted and narrow confines of intra-uterine life. If so much can be acquired before birth, the newborn infant obviously emerges into life with vast capabilities for achieving the further qualities necessary for existence in and adaptation to its new vital and social environment. There is a great vacuum to be immediately

filled, much hunger to be satisfied, a dawning consciousness opening up, a *tabula rasa* to be inscribed with knowledge and principles of conduct. The field for education is open and begins immediately after birth. The first few years of life, from the very beginning, are recognized as the most impressionable and formative period for education and the inculcation of character; for the shaping of the matured and adult personality and ideology; for the indelible integration of the impressions then received into consciousness and character. It is a period purposely and wittingly cultivated and utilized by propagandists for the inculcation of particular cults and dogmas—often for selfish and objectionable purposes. The impressions inculcated in this period of early childhood become firmly established, difficult to change or eradicate, and dominate the entire course of the after life-time. This formative period of life should be energetically utilized for the proper education of the individual and cultivation of the qualities and abilities of the mind and character most rational, helpful, and useful in social and civic relations.

As numberless as the sands of the seashore are the varieties and differences of the ways and modes of life and ideology in which the billions of the present and past inhabitants of the world have been born, developed, carried on, and had their being. The lifeways and cultures of human individuals vary infinitely with respect to social, civic, and economic conditions, community and folkways, ideologies and theologies, greatness and mediocrity, enlightenment and benightedness. In many instances, national and racial groups exhibit cultural characteristics of distinctive type, such as the folkways of the Mexican, Italian, French, Anglo-Saxon, Irish, Russian, and other peoples. Differences may range all the way from high civilization to low savagery. It may

WE ARE NOT BORN CIVILIZED

be noted that savagery is as much a complete way or system of life and culture as is high civilization; from cradle to grave it is a rounded lifetime existence covering all fields of thought and action. The lives of the great majority of the people are commonplace, mediocre, and undistinguished; but there are many individuals whose careers are exceptional and rise to heights of achievement above, and sometimes far above, the ordinary and average.

The great diversities in the achievements of social life and culture that fall to the lot of grown men are determined only in a relatively limited degree by the physical or racial characteristics inherited at birth. There are individual differences in human infants with respect to physical characteristics (such as color), psychic traits, aptitudes, temperament, potentialities of development and adaptation; but these factors exert only minor or little influence on the specific kind and character of the mature culture that is ultimately achieved. The practicability of influencing and improving mankind by genetics or breeding is very limited or nil; it is by environment and society that personality and culture can be shaped, not by birth, origin, or race. In general, and to a very great degree, infants from different races, origins, and conditions of life are potentially equally capable of entering, becoming adapted to, and engaging in any of the innumerable ways and modes of life that make up human society. Infants born in one way of life can, if transplanted, be brought up and assimilated to an entirely different way of life.

Infants of all races, Caucasian, Indian, yellow, colored, and of all kinds of origin, lowly or lofty, therefore have an interchangeable ability and adaptability to acquire any sort of cultural development or type of civilization to which they may be exposed. This is attested by an abundance

of examples and evidence, and is affirmed by eminent scientists in bio-psycho-anthropological fields. Infants born in so-called civilization, who happen to be brought up in the conditions of savage life, may become thoroughly imbued with the savage spirit and ideology, and so satisfied with the savage way of life, as to be unwilling to return to civilized society when later opportunity arises to do so. Many such instances occurred in the early American pioneer days in the case of young children captured by the Indians and reared by them. On the other hand, many unadvantaged infants of the lowliest and humblest origin, and from races regarded as inferior, have under favorable circumstances shown themselves capable of entering fully into the activities and responsibilities and culture of civilized life, even of attaining the highest achievements in science, art, and social and civic service.

In the field of artistic ability and sense of beauty there is no doubt that primitive peoples can be equal, and in the general average perhaps even superior, to the advanced civilizations. Proof of this is afforded by the artistic talent and taste displayed in the various arts and crafts by even the most primitive races, in textiles, basketry, pottery, pictorial art, sculpture, metallurgy, music, the dance, the most amazing and prodigious architectural creations.

Genius and talent may blossom from the lowliest and most unpromising origins. As examples may be cited the distinguished careers of Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, and George Washington Carver of the Negro race, together with the increasing number of contemporary Negroes of ability and distinction; and also of men like Abraham Lincoln and many others who have risen from the direst poverty, the most unpromising obscurity, and the most insig-

COMMON GROUND

nificant ancestry, to the most exalted careers and stations of life. All races and all kinds of peoples have produced great leaders, patriots, sages, and artists. Other races than the Caucasian have developed high civilizations, such as the yellow and dark races of the Orient and the red aborigines of the Americas. High birth origin does not assure high cultural attainment in maturity; aristocratic birth, lineage, and family do not necessarily confer superior ability or culture. On the contrary, lowly and unadvantaged origin does not preclude high adult achievement, even in the face of obstacles and difficulties initially encountered. Racial origin and bodily characteristics are irrelevant in the acquisition of high culture. "The anthropologist tells us . . . that there is really only one race—the human race," writes Eisenberg.

The vaunted Anglo-Saxon race and/or culture may be considered as an example. The purest Anglo-Saxon stock in the United States is located in the southern states, especially in the southern uplands; and yet they have the lowest and poorest social and economic status in the whole country. The general abstract entity of culture, ideology, and institutions prevailing in and characterizing the nation, we commonly term Anglo-Saxon, from its former historical origin. Yet the so-called Anglo-Saxon spirit and institutions which prevail in the United States at the present time are not coterminous with any particular people or race; they feature and characterize a most diverse conglomeration and mixture of nationalities and races from all over the world, assimilated to a common culture. Our term Anglo-Saxon designates a culture, not a race.

Civilization and culture being "acquired" characteristics are not, and are not capable of being, transmitted by heredity to offspring. We are not born civilized or savage, superior or inferior,

but we fortuitously enter some one, or any, of the innumerable ways of life open to mankind. Individuals vary in native ability and aptitudes; but, on the whole and on the average, races and national stocks are about equal, neither superior nor inferior. We become, or are "made," civilized and cultured, but we are not "born" so; we acquire, but do not inherit, civilization. To those who have not given thought to the matter, it may appear strange and unnatural that the valuable qualities acquired in civilization and through culture are not transmitted by heredity to the offspring; but such is the belief held by anthropologists.

These considerations have a fundamental bearing on the part played by race in the affairs of humanity. Conceptions of racial superiority and privilege are generally prevalent and sometimes violently asserted among the so-called Nordic, Aryan, and Anglo-Saxon "races," which are not warranted by the actual biological, psychological, and sociological facts. It is not racial or physical origin that fixes the type and course of the social development that may be attained, but the educative incidence of the particular environment that happens to be entered. A particular race or collective group may develop and maintain a special kind of culture or civilization; but that is a result of postnatal development, and not of birth. Any inferiority attributable to the colored race, for instance, would not be a matter of congenital or bodily characteristics (color of skin, etc.), but would be due to the adverse social and economic conditions and obstacles which obstruct their development. Eminent anthropological authorities testify that Negroes and whites do not differ significantly in intellectual ability. Popular vanity may like to attribute group superiority to birth or race; but that is a false and fallacious

WE ARE NOT BORN CIVILIZED

view. Civilization transcends race. The credit for a high degree of culture and ideology must go to the social milieu and not to racial origin or congenital qualities. From a heterogeneous mixture of nationalities and races may come a homogeneous and specialized type of civilization, perhaps of a high order of excellence. This, however, is not a product of race; and for pride of race should be substituted pride of culture, pride of the collective effort that has produced the social betterment.

The racial relations, discriminations, and antipathies prevalent in these United States stand out as a stark and glaring violation and contradiction of the vaunted principles of equality and freedom which we piously profess. They are irrational, illiberal, unjust, and inhumane, a reproach and disgrace to the country. In the face of the ugly facts, our sanctimonious professions of superior virtue are insincere, hypocritical, and ridiculous; they subject us to the derision of the outside world, and grievously impair our influence for world betterment.

Racial antipathy and hatred looks like an ugly survival, in our supposedly advanced civilization, of a primitive beligerent trait of low savagery, such as might have actuated the head hunters in their fights with neighboring villagers. If the situation were reversed and colored people were predominant in number and power, the minority of whites would probably be subjected to the same kind of antipathy and discrimination. Racial antagonism is based on prejudice and bigotry, and springs from the emotional side of the human character. Attempts are made to justify it, to explain it on rational grounds; but these efforts are vitiated by being dependent on erroneous premises and on distortion and rejection of the actual facts; they are unconvincing and inconclusive. Moral and humanitarian

principles are also violated. As a matter of fact, racial prejudice is so powerfully seated in the American ideology that rational and moral considerations are academic, unheeded and rejected, ineffective in mitigating the ugly manifestations of the hostile racial spirit in this country. The mere presentation of views like these will arouse violent contradiction and denunciation. The human mind has two sides, emotional as well as intellectual. The basic issues involved here will be clarified by recognition that racial antipathy is exclusively a matter of emotionalism and prejudice, irrational and illiberal, and not of rationality. Such prejudice may acquire a strong hold on human nature, powerfully influence human action, be difficult to eradicate. We have to deal with human nature as it is, and not as it ought to be; and the trouble with the world is that, with our prejudices and our selfishness, we act like human beings. The urgent problem of racial relations in the United States will be exceedingly difficult to solve.

The argument is frequently advanced that the colored people are naturally inferior to their white neighbors because they have not had the benefit and advantage of having lived for many generations in a civilized environment and society, and thereby of not having become equipped with superior native characteristics and abilities. But the qualities of civilization are acquired characteristics, not, as we have seen, transmissible by heredity. Consequently the whites, in spite of their exposure for many generations to civilization, have not thereby absorbed any superior cultural traits in their channel of heredity so as to be able to transmit them to their offspring. The whites have no advantage over the colored in this respect; both races are born and enter the struggle for life and culture on equal terms. The argument that

COMMON GROUND

the whites have a superior advantage over the colored because of their generations of civilized life therefore falls to the ground.

These considerations may bring a sense of surprise and shock to our notions of pride in race and birth; but if the biological premises are correct, the conclusion is inescapable. Let me repeat: for pride of race and origin we should substitute a sense of pride in our culture. We can do nothing about our birth; that is beyond our control, and a matter for

which we do not merit any credit. But the culture, the civilization, the enlightenment which we attain are achieved and won by our own efforts; and that is the legitimate and praiseworthy object for our pride and satisfaction, the noble aim worth striving for.

John Benjamin Nichols is a Washington, D.C., physician, who contributes frequently to medical and other periodicals.

TRANSPLANTING

TOYO SUYEMOTO

*No anchorage in shallow dust,
No searching hold has found
More than shadows to grasp
Where hope withers in the ground.*

*Oh, guard the exposed root against
Untimely sun and wind:
Some other soil may prove
More flower-wise and kind.*

*So let a richer earth restore
What once had died in need.
Strong roots will then respond
And bear tomorrow's seed.*

A native Californian, Toyo Suyemoto was graduated from the University of California in 1937. Caught up in the Japanese evacuation of 1942, she spent the first six months in Tanforan, living in a horse stable; then was shifted to the desert camp of Topaz, Utah. Resettled in Cincinnati, she is now librarian of the College of Nursing and Health of the University of Cincinnati.

FAREWELL TO SICILY

R. R. AARONSON

THEIR OWN NAMES they may forget, but the name of the ship that brought them to America, never! (The S.S. *Alesia*, *Algeria*, *Aller*, *Alsatia*, *Belgravia*, *Bohemia*, *Bolivia*, *Brittania*, *Burgundia*, *Caledonia*, *California*, *Clive*, *Columbia*, *Elysia*, *Ems*, *Fulda*, *Hesperia*, *Italia*.)

What they ate last night they may not remember, but the name of the ship that brought them to America fifty years ago they will never forget! (The S.S. *Karamania*, *Liguria*, *Massilia*, *Neckar*, *Normannia*, *Nuestria*, *Olympia*, *Oregon*, *Patria*, *Pictavia*, *Sarnia*, *Scindia*, *Scotia*, *Sicilia*.)

Fifty, sixty years ago, wherever you went in Sicily, they spoke of only one thing: who left for America last week, who was leaving this week, who would depart the next. For every week, every day, there was hunger in Sicily. Who has hunger searches for bread. And, truly, the ways of God were unfathomable, for all a Sicilian asked was "work, a little sleep, a piece of bread for his children, and an old pair of shoes to go to Mass."

The sub-agents in town did not close eyes night or day with the people coming and going to make arrangements for the trip to America. In the lamplight they would fill out the forms in ink: name, sex, birth date, height, color eyes, color hair, occupation ("Occupation? What occupation? Put down 'Laborer'"), and why do you want to go to America? The answer was always the same: "To work, to eat bread."

The men, the husbands with their big

black mustaches, carrying their meager belongings tied in a shawl, went to America first. Many traveled steerage, deep in the hold of the ship, with no air to breathe and no room to turn one's head. Most went third-class, which cost two hundred lire, or about \$40 at that time. The money was invariably borrowed from a relative who had preceded them to America. For who could afford the *tichetto*, the ticket, the fare to America? You could count them, there were so few.

When a large amount of money was mentioned in the presence of a Sicilian, the poor man would exclaim: "Two hundred lire!—but what are you playing, the numbers game?" And would quickly add: "You mean two hundred lire in debt, not earned. Or were you speaking of a Baron having two hundred lire?"

The sub-agent would send the completed forms to the *Municipio*, the local town hall. The *Municipio* would forward them in turn to the officials in Palermo. When the papers were found in order, the precious passport was issued and sent to the sub-agent, who would then inform the applicant when the ship was to sail from Palermo for Naples. The prospective emigrants were instructed to report at the *Ospedale* for a physical examination, particular care being taken to detect eye diseases.

The night before he left town, families, relatives, godmothers, godfathers, friends, neighbors would gather in the home of the person about to depart. Always there would be *biscotti e vino*, little cakes and

COMMON GROUND

red wine. The visitors raised their thick glasses and toasted: "*Buona Fortuna! Buona Fortuna!*" Adding solicitously: "If you don't pass it well in America, come back to us. Return to your friends." The rejoinder was always the same: "I shall be back. In a few years, when I have made my fortune, I shall return!"

Sicilian men always promised that they would return in a few years. But once they arrived in America and set their foot down, it stuck, and with few exceptions—like returning for a wife (a cousin preferably, for then you knew whom you were taking—you knew whose daughter she was), or returning to see one's aged parents for the last time (for flesh should be respected when alive, the dead cannot see)—with few exceptions, Sicilians never saw their native soil again.

Tears, tears at the partings. The townspeople were not finished wiping their eyes weeping farewells to husbands, fathers, sons, and brothers, when they started again to bid another relative good-bye. For there were good-byes every week. There was hunger every week, every day in Sicily.

Useless for a Sicilian to have an art, a trade, like a *muraturi*, a mason, for houses were built only during the good-weather season, during the warm dry months from May to September. A mason's work was seasonal. Hunger was not seasonal. Hunger was perpetual. Clothes could be patched to last a lifetime, shoes could be resoled, but hunger was another matter. "One cannot live on wind and words, one needs wheat and wood."

A mason lived with the day; he lived with the wages earned that day. The *patruna* became rich with the blood, the labor, of the men who worked with sweat of brow, who worked like oxen. They were notorious for maltreating their workers and defrauding them of their earnings. A master called for a worker when he

chose, employed and discharged him as he pleased, and paid him at his own convenience, for the master has no master.

At harvest time, early in June, a field worker (with back bent from pulling dandel, the weed that grew among the wheat) would call for his pay on Sunday morning at his employer's home. As often as not, he spent half a day waiting—and swearing: "*Sangue di Gesu Cristu!*"—outside the door, or in an anteroom—for he was not permitted to set foot in the home of the master. The servant was likely to inform him that the master was still asleep; later, that he was too busy to see him or that he was having his mid-day meal and could not be disturbed. Finally, the worker would be paid, but often only part of his wages, on the pretext that it was all the master could spare.

Useless for a boy to start learning to be a cobbler at the age of seven, to work day and night, on a lamp-lighted bench during the winter, or mending shoes in front of his door in the hot Sicilian summer. In Sicily the cobbler resoled so well you could display the shoes in the window. But when your shoes needed mending, he expected the customer to bring the lire in advance to buy the leather, for he rarely had the capital for it. A cobbler did most of his work for the Feasts, when he made two new pair of shoes. But whom were you going to frighten with that? For he had to wait as for the Messiah to be paid for his labor. Cobblers were usually paid once a year—in August.

The barber, too, was generally paid yearly, in August, although in a few cases he received his money at the end of each month. A shave was *un sordu* (equivalent to one cent); a haircut, two. If the barber went to the customer's home, the shave would be two cents, and the haircut, three. The customer sat in an ordinary straight-backed house chair, holding a small enameled basin under his chin while

FAREWELL TO SICILY

the barber lathered his face. During the sweltering summer season, the barbers often moved the chair out in front of their shops and plied their trade there.

Young men hearing the "success" stories of relatives and *paesani* in America sought to be trained as barbers so they, too, could work and earn their bread in America. They practiced two or three weeks just before departing, quickly acquiring skill with the shears and razor—a means of livelihood in the New World.

Useless to become a *farmacista*, a pharmacist, with mortar and pestle painted on the window; for the townfolk used mostly home remedies. Olive oil was their "first medicine." It was used to cure almost every ill—both internal and external.



When home remedies failed, they went to the barber, who would give them an "oil" to try. Then, too, there were *Erbarii*, herbalists, who sold the townspeople herbs to infuse and drink, herbs and grasses to wash their wounds.

Useless to be a storekeeper, for the poor could buy only on credit, and when a Sicilian made a debt of fifty lire, he could

never repay it in his lifetime unless by some miracle he won "The Play of Lot-to," the numbers game. One merchant, perceiving the plight of the storekeeper who kept accumulating notched sticks representing uncollected accounts, decided he would avoid the difficulty by extending no credit. But the peasants and townspeople, having no money, could not trade in his store, so he fared even worse.

Aye, a Sicilian was born with debts.

A Sicilian married with debts. "But what honeymoon? What sugarmoon?" After the wedding, departing for their new home to their own affairs, the couple was fortunate if they found a piece of bread the next morning:

And a Sicilian died with debts.

In Sicily, a father who had two or three daughters, lived with his hands to his head until he could borrow the fare to America. Primarily he had to think of their dowries to marry them off, for—how do they say it?—Who doesn't marry off children, nor plant grapevines, does not yet know the way of the world.

The elements were against him. There were years of drought when only two drops of water fell and the crops withered for lack of moisture. The summers were oppressively hot; the suns of Sicily cooked stones.

The winters were chilly and damp. The long rainy season started in mid-September and lasted through March and April. Rainstorms, with the wind whistling, the people unable to cultivate the fields, staying home making mold and cobwebs, setting foot outdoors only to attend Mass.

Of course, there was no need to tell the seasons how to act—they knew what they had to do; but often the rain and cold persisted so long it seemed as though winter had come to stay all year and not just for the season. There was the miserable winter when it rained incessantly the entire month of January. "From the sky

came half-an-ocean," the townsmen recalled. "But where could so much water have been kept?"

Prayers then. Removing the gold-crowned Madonna and the Bambino from Their niche, and placing Them in the center of the altar. Lighting the candles. The peasants making fervent supplications to Jesus and Mary and the Saints for the rains to cease. Day after rainy day the priest conducted prayers. Finally, one morning he wearily climbed the pulpit and announced: "People of Sicily: If you want me to pray, I shall pray, but, remember, we are in the month of January."

So the men stayed home, chained, roped, tied, with sick hearts, satisfying themselves with four strands of spaghetti, without oil, without salt, so they could have something to put in their mouths, something to put in their stomachs.

A Sicilian preferred a malignant fever to staying at home like a dog, having nothing to do but chase the flies off the mules; sitting with the candle, without work, lacking the what, the how, and the when. With no work, no bread in Sicily, a Sicilian had no choice: he either had to borrow the fare to go to America, or stay at home, swearing like a heretic, beating his head against the wall.

Nevertheless, a Sicilian needed courage, the courage of a lion, to travel, to leave his family, to be separated from his people. Before the mass emigration to America, few had ever left their home towns. The uprooting was heart-breaking: "We are of that earth, we love her."

Sicilians traveled so little that, in a town three miles long, the inhabitants of opposite ends of town spoke with a slightly different accent and a somewhat different usage of words.

Usually the first and only time a Sicilian left his home town was when he was called

at the age of 19 for his physical examination by his King, Vittorio Emanuele or Umberto, for compulsory military service. By carriage, if he could afford it, or by two-wheeled cart and horse with the three-lire fare supplied by his government, the young man traveled to military headquarters—*Comando Distretto Militare di Girgenti*—in the city of Girgenti, the city of golden Greek temples. A month later, the men in their military uniforms were taken to Palermo and Naples, to be away from home an interminable and agonizing three years, being paid the pittance of two cents a day.

Sicilian women left their home town only when they departed for America. Indeed, they rarely crossed the step-of-the-door, except in the evening—as in the time of Isaac and Rebekah—when they went out to the water fountain to fill their terra cotta jars with water that was the sweetest in the world, water like crystal, water fresh as roses.

Aye, a Sicilian needed courage to go to America, for money is the courage of man, and a Sicilian did not even have a *centesimo*, a fifth of a cent. In the end, necessity, the struggle for survival, gave them courage. Courage and confidence in God.

The old ones, the grandparents, came to say farewell; the men with white beards longer than St. Joseph's; the women toothless, barely able to take a step: "Eh, we shall not see each other again! But we shall meet in the Other Life, when we go to a Better World, the World of Truth! Farewell, and good fortune in America!"

The mothers wept, for the love of a mother never ends. A mother forgives with all her heart. A mother will pawn her eyes for her children. The mothers wept, and if all their tears were put together, you could have washed clothes in them: "Addio, my son. God accompany you, my son. God accompany you,

FAREWELL TO SICILY

where you go and where you come! Return in sacrament."

The wives implored, through tears as large as pears, tears that came from the heart and not from the eyes: "Don't go! Don't go! We may never see each other again. Stay! We shall manage somehow. God will not abandon us. God will not turn His back on us. Have patience, wait for good fortune!"

"Have patience!" In irritation—for the hungry one is always irritable—the exasperated man would exclaim: "There was a Tree of Patience, but it withered. Wait for good fortune! Eh, now it will come, now it won't come. I don't want to wait any more for the door of fortune to open. Useless to say: 'God give me fortune!' How goes the proverb? 'Help yourself and God will help you too.' Who risks, nibbles!" Who risks crossing the ocean, may find work, may nibble bread.

The little ones, the children, wept at their fathers' leaving, hardly recognizing them when they met again years later in America.

The *amici* came. Eh, sometimes better friends than relatives! The words of the ancients should be written in letters of gold, should be placed over the doorways for all to see: *As many friends you lose, so many steps you descend.* Friends who always offered sympathy and consolation when they heard the woes of a house: "I am grieved. I hope your house flowers like the staff of St. Joseph, but God says: 'Look at those behind you, who are poorer than you!'"

But were there any poorer than a poor Sicilian, who was master only of a glass of water, or not even master of that? A Sicilian had nothing to give but his heart. All his riches, all he owned, was his nickname. You could have opened a store with all the nicknames in Sicily.

The friends bade farewell: "*Addio, buon viaggio, and happy return!*" "*Addio,*

God bless you and give you fortune and health for eternity!" "*Addio, till we meet again!*"

The neighbors came. You could hide from all except your neighbor. For if a neighbor did not see you, he could hear you. The neighbors raised their glasses of red wine and drank the health of those about to depart for America: "*Salute! Salute!*"

There were so many tears.

Addio, then, to the familiar sight of the priest-with-the-pen-and-the-paper, for he acted as scribe for his unlettered parishioners in answer to a call to look over the tax notice left by the bailiff (the earth was taxed, one's house was taxed, one's store was taxed, food was taxed, water was taxed, the cemetery was taxed; aye, the air was taxed).

Farewell to the Friday morning ritual outside the Baron's house, where ten, twelve men, too old to work (old age is carrion!) stood in line for the Baron to hand each un sordu.

To the brown-robed monks with their long beards and baskets, going about town on muleback collecting bread, eggs, oil, and wine "for St. Francis." To the starry white jasmine growing along the monastery wall. Jasmine had a fragrance so sweet they called it the perfume of the angels; brought indoors, a perfume paradising a home.

Farewell to the *Calvario*, atop a high prominence reached by a wide flight of stone steps, from where one could clearly see as far as the Mountain of Alcamo. In the summer, when the women washed their clothes in the stream about half a mile distant, one could shout an urgent message to them from the *Calvario*: "Maria, the Cricket, come home, your mother feels ill." Or, "Rosaria, the Little Bell, come home, a letter just arrived from America."

Addio to the dreams, the dead day-

COMMON GROUND

dreams. For, from the time a boy learned to rope his own trousers, from the time he was taken to the country fields and felt and smelled and tasted the earth of Sicily, he dreamed of nothing else but that someday, with the will of God, he would be owner of a piece of land. For the land did not traduce you, the earth did not betray you; you could always depend on *la terra benedetta*. You dropped seeds into the soil and then, in time of nothing, a miracle would happen. A miracle wrought only by earth and God. And who says there is no God should be spit in the face!

For from the tiny seeds grew the golden grain, the green vine, the white blossoms of the fava bean; the fava bean pod, long, thick, and waxy green, gathered late in May in tall wicker baskets. They made a house full and warm, and a family then had the "come in" for the summer, and for the winter, too. For, like macaroni with garlic and oil, macaroni with fava beans was a popular dish. *Pasta cu li favi* walked in the houses; the meat stayed outside.

Wood for the fire, dried beans in the water, a sliced onion, a ripe tomato, a fistful of salt, then three drops of oil-of-Sicily. Cook until done. Add to boiled macaroni. The smell, oh the sweet smell of that dish! With the aroma alone, you could eat your bread.

This was the dream, the hope, the goal: a patch of land to cultivate. For a Sicilian who could feed his family walked with dignity, walked with his head up, looking you in the face and eyes. Not afraid to speak, not having to take his cap off. Feeling like a Baron, feeling like a man among men.

But who, who could arrive at that blessed state? You could count them, there were so few.

America then.

Those about to leave took along letters

from townsmen to loved ones; took addresses of the *paesani* who had gone before them—St. Philip Street in New Orleans, Locust Street in Kansas City, Central Avenue in Brooklyn. Homes of Sicilians that were more like taverns, welcoming the newly arrived, squeezing their hands and their hearts, sharing their sleep and their bread.

Emigrants pictured America as *un deserto*, an arid land, with gold wherever you looked, wherever you put your foot. America was the Land of Gold, yes, but what of the *verdura*? The greens? For the *verdura* was necessary as air, necessary as bread. So Sicilians took cuttings and seeds—parsley, mint, basil, fennel, celery, and tomato with them to America, the large purplish onions and the ghostly braids of silvery garlic bulbs. Their *gratta-formaggiu*, grate cheese (grater); their *sculapasta*, drain macaroni (colander); their *zbotta pisci*, turn fish (spatula); their pot and frying pan.

Into the trunks went *estrattu* in jars, tomato extract, baked by the blazing sun; almonds ("each almond worth a lira"), braids of figs ("each fig weighing a quintal"), dried fava beans; the soft goatskins that were used for bedding, stretched over a hard straw-filled mattress. They made bundles of their red and white woolen stockings; last linens woven on old looms, delicate laces crocheted by lamplight, laces so intricate you needed an engineering mind to follow the Tarantula design. And always, before they locked and strapped down the trunk top, they remembered the pictures of the Madonna and the Bambino, and of the Saints.

Early in the morning, they gathered at the cafe, where they had coffee and bread, but who could swallow? Mothers, wives, sisters, children were there for last farewells. ("Write. Don't let us lack letters. Write two-lines-of-letter telling us when you arrive in America.")

FAREWELL TO SICILY

Tears, tears. With the flame of hope in their hearts, they boarded the shiny black Postal carriage driven by two horses. It left promptly at 6 a.m., the hour when the church bells began ringing, when the goatherd was going from house to house, using his tree-branch on a straggling goat, stopping at the doors to fill the latter, the milk bowls.

It was long past midday when the travelers reached the station. There they boarded the train and by nightfall reached Palermo, the capital of Sicily: Palermo, "where blows the orange tree," Palermo that had sidewalks, that was complete, where nothing was lacking. There they were immediately besieged by the porters.

"Signori, let me carry your bundle." Porters charged a lira or two, depending on the size of the bundles, carried in hand and on head, the heavy trunks on their backs.

At Palermo, all had their eyes re-examined at the government clinic before they boarded the ship. Here the men were stripped and examined for venereal diseases. Sometimes the doctors could not be sure whether or not the eyes were sound, because they were reddened by excessive weeping at parting, and they refused to let many pass, sending them back home with their hearts in their shoes.

Until the overnight ship to Naples was ready to sail, the Government Consul allotted each person one lira per day for food. The cost of lodging at Palermo, however, was borne by the traveler.

At Naples they joined the natives of other parts of Italy, and together they embarked with heavy, hammering hearts for the long voyage over the Mediterranean, through the Strait of Gibraltar, and across the Atlantic to America and a new life.

On board, they were overwhelmed by the immensity of the vessel ("We lost our way on the ship"), and afterward in America they would say of something

large, "It is as big as a ship"; in Sicily the expression had been "as big as a cow."

Stewards in sailor's dress went about the ship calling out: "Who wants bread and wine?" Sicilians were bewildered at the strange, light-textured bread, so unlike that in Sicily. The food served third-



class passengers was inferior and unpalatable, and if you wished spaghetti that was half-Christian, or sugar for the coffee, you paid extra for it. For many Sicilians it was the first time they had seen sugar-in-a-piece—lump sugar. A dish of spaghetti with tomato sauce and grated cheese cost the equivalent of twenty-five cents. It was bought in the ship's galley and carried out to the nearest bench, or up on deck, and eaten there. The water pump was somewhere amidships, with one glass for all to use.

Down in the hold of the ship were tiered beds lining the sides of large rooms, for the third-class passengers. Everybody went to bed fully clothed, but who could close his eyes? For 14 (or 16, 19, 21, or 28) days, they did not change their clothes. Upstairs there were cubicles with toilets. At night the 'rinale slid across the

floor as the ship rolled from side to side.

Accustomed as they were to the open fields and mountains of Sicily, the cramped quarters, aired by a single port-hole, gave them a smothering feeling of claustrophobia, and many said later in America that never again could they set foot on a ship for that reason.

In stormy weather, when the ship rolled and pitched, the women gathered in groups and knelt, praying for safety. "Heart of Jesus! Heart of Mary! Guardian Angel, watch over us!" The sailors went about the ship calling out, "Don't be frightened. Don't be frightened! This weather will pass!" Outside, wherever you looked, were mountains-of-water; inside, wherever you looked, all were sick.

In good weather a group of young men entertained the passengers playing guitar, mandolin, and accordion, playing and singing the old songs: "Oh Marie, oh Marie, how much sleep I have lost for thee!" "La Spagnola," "Marianna, let's go to the country," and "Santa Lucia"; songs that brought memories of home and loved ones far away, songs that brought sadness, that made eyes and heart weep once more.

The shawled women were strangers when they set foot on the ship, but before they separated at Ellis Island they had become friends, as though their arms were tied together, as though they had shared the sleep-of-the-night, had shared bread all their lives. They recounted their reasons for leaving their respective towns:

"In my town we saw meat only from far away."—"Meat? Who saw bread? Chestnuts when we had them."

"In my town we ate bread with one orange."—"In mine, we didn't recognize fruit."

"In my town we ate our macaroni alone, alone."—"In mine we cooked our macaroni early and let it stay in the water so a few strands would swell to a kilo."

"In my town we dipped our bread in water."—"In mine, even when there was bread, there were such large families, it came to only one slice apiece; we ate the slice given, not taken."

"We walked to the country to pick the artichokes that grew wild there, to take home to our families, and sometimes to sell."—"We went among the rocks, searching for snails, in order to feed our hungry families."

"We conversed in the dark to save the oil in the lamp."—"In winter we went to sleep early to save the three pieces of wood and straw that tried to keep us warm."

"We measured the pieces of thread when we borrowed them, so we would know exactly how much to return when we had the cent to buy a spool."—"We wore clothes that were patched so often you couldn't tell which was the original cloth."

The men, too, were strangers when they boarded the vessel, but before they disembarked they were eating out of the same dish. They formed groups, exchanged confidences, made it a point to advise and warn each other to be wary of suspicious-looking Americans who asked questions of one newly arrived. "Open your eyes, my brother, for a man warned is half saved. Better be wise than stupid! Better to say 'What if . . .' than 'If I had known!'" They practiced and learned to shout "Gu-anni!" Go on! "Geerrarraheeya!" Get out of here! at anyone who looked as though he might take advantage of one who could not speak *Americano*.

Their conversations were filled with "From where did you come in Italy?" Italians spoke in the way of their country, of that blessed earth! The smooth Italian l's rolled from their tongues like flowing lava from Vesuvius, with no ups, no downs, and no twisting of the mouth.

FAREWELL TO SICILY

Sicilians said that throughout the world there were those who spoke with the throat, those who spoke with the nose—languages that not even the dogs wanted—and there were those who spoke with God's tongue, and that tongue, that language, was Italian.

"From where did you come in Sicily?" Dialects so homely they made your hunger pass; dialects dry with d's, an eruption of jagged pebbles from Mt. Etna. In Sicily, the glorious Italian language was saved, like music, for the Feast Days. Italian was music, to be sung on the principal Feasts and the holy day of Christmas.

"Where in America are you stopping? Whom have you in America? What part of America are you going to?" they asked each other.

"Nov' Orlenza. To New Orleans, to meet my husband."

"Kanza Citi. In Kansas City, I have my brother."

"Brucholini. To Brooklyn, where lives my father. He will be waiting at the Port of New York for me, when we arrive in America, if God wills!"

They spoke of the class system in their individual towns. Some had only the high (the rich), the upper class, acting like royalty, and the low (the poor), the peasant, living in thorns, passing the life of the Saints. People whose heads never saw a pillow, who slept on straw every night of their lives.

Other towns had high, middle, and low; the low being elevated to the middle class when he became owner of a donkey.

He then rated the respectful salutation, "Mastro" Giuseppe, and couldn't be held down, acting like the high, acting like Umberto, swaggering into a room as though he were entering Rome.

But all that was left behind. Now they were on a ship coming to America, blessed America. "America is a land where there is no better or worse. America is a land where Christ makes men all the same."

As they neared the shores, they crowded on deck. Many sank to their knees, and through tears (tears at leaving the Old World, tears greeting the New), they sobbed: "Eternal Father, we thank Thee!"

"And here we are. Finally. We have arrived at the Port of New York."

"God has given us the grace to see America. God has made us see this miracle with our own eyes."

Overcome with emotion, they held their children's hands and, pointing out the Statue of Liberty, they exclaimed:

"We have arrived at the Statue of Liberty, the land of Liberty. We have arrived in America, the land of gold, of work, of bread.

"Blessed the ship that has brought us to America. Blessed America; blessed Columbus who discovered it. Glory, glory and Paradise to Christopher Columbus!"

Mrs. R. R. Aaronson is the author of an earlier piece on the Sicilians in the Autumn 1946 CG—"A Piece of Bread."

The illustrations are by Bernadine Custer.



AMERICAN HISTORY AS A RECORD AND A PROCESS

LOUIS ADAMIC

LIKE MANY words, the word "history" has more than one meaning. My dictionary defines it as the "methodical record of public events" and also as the "course of human affairs." The difference is important, and I shall return to it in a moment.

If we regard history as the course of human affairs, a bird's-eye look at the whole of it shows that—with numerous stops and pauses, and with not infrequent veerings and backslides—mankind has been moving in one general direction. Thousands of separate little human rivulets have been flowing together in larger and larger streams, flowing from the clan, through the tribe, through the nation and race, toward denationalization, democracy, internationalism, humanity. Some day in the future, if atom bombs and bacterial weapons don't destroy us, these streams will unite into one river big as the world.

In this historical process, America holds a unique place. She is not the first example of a nation made up of various national, racial, or tribal groups. China, Britain, and the Soviet Union are, in the main, political unions of peoples living in the regions and civilizations of their ancestors. But the people of the United States, excepting the Indians, began to leave the lands of their forebears in recent centuries, and came to mix and mingle with others all over a new, vast, rich, and practically virgin section of the earth.

This mixing and mingling of many di-

verse elements led to the formulation of some of the democratic principles in the basic documents of the new United States: that of the separation of state and church, for one. For democracy and the coming together of various peoples are facets of the same jewel. It is no coincidence that as the world shrinks and becomes One World, so also the idea of the Common Man—*demos*: the people—swirls and spreads around the globe.

The historical movement toward confluence cannot be stopped, but it can be blocked, checked, hampered. Dams hold back the waters, slow them down; here and there streams are diverted, creeks are polluted.

And as the streams continue to grow at once larger and fewer, it takes bigger, stronger dams to retard them. Nowadays the battles between the forces of stream and dam touch the whole world. There are world crises and world wars—not yet world peace. In the world at large in many separate countries there are simultaneously trends to co-operation and tides to destruction. Antagonisms are increasing, intensifying, bent on inhibiting the peoples' impulses to get together.

For a long time the United States of America has been the arena of a psychological civil war. In many ways it resembles the psychological civil war raging in practically every country. In other ways it is peculiarly American.

It is a war fought on many overlapping fronts, between many opposing formations. The country is psychologically split

up into "we-they" groups. The "we" of the internationalists is the "they" of the isolationists; the privileged "we" think of the underprivileged as "they," and the other way about. "We-they" lines rise—sometimes sharply—between Protestants and Catholics, between Jews and Gentiles. To the Negroes, the whites are "they." The old-stock Americans lump the "foreigners" as "they," and the "foreigners" think "they" of old-stock Americans and of each other.

The "we-they" attitude issues from and leads to prejudice; prejudice leads to discrimination and, when strong enough, breaks out into violence. There is only a difference in degree between resenting the presence of Negroes on buses and the horrors of Nazi concentration camps. And there are those who fear that, if the present crises within the United States and in our foreign relations are not soon brought under the control of sound social intelligence, we are apt to outdo the Nazis in violence against minorities.

During World War II, after the Japanese and Japanese Americans were rounded up on the Pacific Coast and put behind barbed wire, the psychological civil war entered into a kind of armistice. But the issues went underground. How much compressed steam they there generated began to show soon after the V-E and V-J Days in our vague fears, our self-righteousness, our uncertain foreign policy, and our approach to atomic energy; in the capital-labor relations, in loyalty tests, in the lack of faith in our social-economic system, and in the sharp spurting of prejudice.

World War II gave us at least the unity of wanting to defeat the Axis. After V-J Day that unity began to fall apart. Whether it was the denazification of Bavaria or the Mikado system in Japan or outright fighting in Gary, Indiana, or in Los Angeles between Negro and

white school children over non-segregated schools, we were not meeting it with any national will, purpose, or accord.

We take pride in considering ourselves a democracy while at the same time we tolerate and encourage racism, anti-Semitism, discrimination against immigrant groups. We contradict ourselves all over the place. We flounder in a fog of perplexity, bewilderment, ill will, tinged at times with hopelessness, shot through with fear—we scarcely know of what.

I believe it is in large part because few of us understand what makes America unique, what America is, how she was built, how her institutions and way of life came into being and what they rest on.

Here is where the discrepancy between history as a record and history as a process ceases to be a quibble over definitions and becomes part of our imagination and our life.

American history as it is written is not the same as American history as it happened. For three hundred years, the record and the process have grown farther and farther apart. The record written into the standard textbooks portrays the U.S.A. as a white-Protestant-Anglo-Saxon country with a white-Protestant-Anglo-Saxon civilization patched here and there with pieces of alien civilizations. This is the prevailing view, and it reaches beyond the textbooks and the teachers. It is taken for granted by almost everybody; it is breathed in from the atmosphere and exhaled back again into the air about us. It pours through the press and radio and movies, through church and club, school and library, through politics, business, the professions. It envelops us like a fog, creeping into our actions and reactions, into our picture of the past and our aspirations for the future.

Millions and millions of Americans feel themselves cut off from full participation in such an America. Some are barred by

color, or the seeming slant of the eye, or a non-English mother tongue. Some are barred or inhibited by their form of worship.

About a tenth of our population is Negro. Over a third are first, second, and third-generation non-Anglo-Saxon Americans. Approximately ten per cent is Jewish and fifteen per cent is Catholic. But the notion that this is a white-Protestant-Anglo-Saxon country keeps the walls of prejudice high and strong between the "we's" and the "they's." The walls criss-cross America, shutting off group from group, sheltering snipers and casting shadows and keeping millions of people from reaching their full growth as Americans, as individual persons in the light of day.

A great many Americans are bored with our recorded history. Others feel a stiff resistance to it. More and more people are coming to question the prevailing view, to doubt that we are a homogeneous country with a few excrescences stuck on. Such a theory leaves out too much, explains too little. More and more people sense that something is wrong, dimly feel that the prevailing notion is flat, thin, two-dimensional, like a silhouette.

There is plenty of data to show that the notion is false.

The size and amount of historical facts which have been omitted from the record is tremendous. How many people realize, for instance, that the Negroes' American struggle for liberty dates from 1526? How many know that a few Polish, German, and Armenian workers staged one of the New World's fights for freedom at Jamestown in Virginia in 1619? Or that freedom of the press was fathered by a German printer in New York in the 1730s? Or that Thomas Jefferson's Italian friend Philip Mazzei profoundly influenced the Revolution, or that the Irish were vastly important in that war, and in shaping the polity of the new United States? Or

to what extent Haym Salomon helped finance the Revolution?

I think much of American history needs to be given new emphases. It is the only way I see to bring the record and the process together again. I think, too, that if an historian would start from scratch, and look at all the data assembled together, he would find they fall into a new pattern, suggesting a new—and highly exciting—way of looking at America.

America is not a homogeneous body trying to digest and assimilate foreign lumps. It is a heterogeneous body whose skeleton, muscles, nerves, cells, blood, and interworkings are all made up of substances and processes from different sources.

American civilization is the interflow, the interplay within the diversity of its human elements. It is not Anglo-Saxon, or Germanic, or Slavic, or Latin, or Oriental, or African. It is American—something which from the beginning has been shaped and woven and blended and grown from all our population groups, and reshaped and endlessly influenced by the natural environment of the New World. The share any one element has had in its building is not sufficiently unmixed with other shares to overshadow the contributions of any other element. The United States owes much to the great, tough Anglo-Saxon thread in her fabric, but if we could separate out all non-Anglo-Saxon threads—an impossible task—the remainder would not be America as we know it, regardless of the written record and the prevailing national fog.

It is hard to find one's way through the fog of a generally accepted idea. Centuries ago when the earth turned out to be round instead of flat, there must have been first a widespread indifference, later a terrific furore in people's minds. No doubt at first most of them said, "Phooey—everybody knows it's flat." But little by

little, as they saw that the idea of roundness explained a lot of things left unexplained by the notion of flatness, people entertained the notion of roundness.

Its practical consequences threw open the New World to the great Atlantic migration. Who knows the extent of its imaginative, ideational consequences? The general current of thinking and feeling changed immeasurably. The new way of seeing jibed much better with observed facts, and acceptance of it gave new thrills, new vistas to human life, releasing its dammed-up energy, sweeping it forward with new impetus.

As I say, America holds a unique place by virtue of combining diversity and political democracy. But that place has been slipping farther and farther back in the world procession, because America has not seen herself as the product of heterogeneity.

It didn't matter so much while isolationism and the antagonistic "we-they" categories were still able to flourish. But the atomic bomb blasted more than Hiroshima and Nagasaki; it blew isolationism into smithereens, finally and forever. From now on, no civilization can thrive, or even last, that is not built on the interflow within diversity.

America is the world in miniature. But she seems to have been born ahead of her time, before the idea of a multiple-textured civilization had taken hold of people's minds. This accounts in large part for the chasm between the United States as she is and as she thinks she is. We have tried to explain a tremendously variegated fabric in terms of a single thread. And while we have been doing it, the world has caught up with us. In fact, the world is now passing us by.

If we could make the imaginative leap away from the white-Protestant-Anglo-Saxon view, if we became aware that our

dynamic as a country is founded on diversity, we would break the main dam holding us back. The American stream could start flowing again, could bring into full view and play the healthy simultaneous fusion and tension of stubborn, creative differences.

Those among us with dark skins or with Japanese faces, or with foreign-born parents or grandparents, would find their national or racial roots in America's history. Those of Protestant Anglo-Saxon forebears would find in the United States not a country going to the dogs, overwhelmed by "foreign" waves and ways, but a country regaining her position in the forefront of human progress.

All of us—particularly the young—would begin to make new integrations on the basis of individuality rather than on race, religion, or national background. Such integrations would allow us to remain ourselves, free of the frantic, de-vitalizing search for something to cling to; free, on the other hand, of the need to cling to a single fraying thread. We would have a sense of belonging to an America whose continuity and whose essential strength includes all the people who helped to make her. Having an intimate stake, all of us, in America's past and present, we would be a much more creative and productive people, much better able to deal with our internal and international problems.

Well-known author and lecturer, Louis Adamic has concerned himself for years with the importance to America of the newer immigrant strains in our population. He is now editing the important Peoples of America series for Lippincott, in which They Came From Holland by Arnold Mulder and They Came From Hungary by Emil Lengyel have already appeared.

THE NISEI IN JAPAN

ROGER BALDWIN

AN ATHLETIC-LOOKING Japanese American youth in a college sport suit called on me at my hotel in Tokyo last summer with a note of introduction from his brother-in-law, an officer in the Occupation forces. "Please help this boy keep his U.S. citizenship," it read. "He prizes it more than anything in the world. He may have lost it by taking a wartime job under the Japanese government. He was caught here at the outbreak of the war on a visit from California with his family. He was only seventeen then. Now he wants to go back. He is American at heart. Do help him."

This typical American youth with a Japanese face explained that he had made a grave mistake in working for the Japanese government in the war. "But," he said, "the pressure was terrible. I hated it. But I thought it was that or the army."

I tried to reconcile him to Japan. "You've been here now six years," I said. "You've had a good education and you have a good job. Japan is building a great future, even if life is trying now. Why do you want to go back to the United States and face the life of a Japanese American? You know what you'll be up against."

His eyes filled with tears. "Can't you understand?" he said. "I was born there. It is the only real home I have."

Joe Kawai is just one of many American boys and girls caught by the war in Japan. As it chanced under our rather technical citizenship laws, he had not lost his citizenship, because the war job he took was

not one "open exclusively to Japanese citizens." He will come home. But hundreds of others who lost their U.S. citizenship will not.

In Tokyo they came to me or wrote me by the score because of a public announcement that I bore a mission from the Japanese American Citizens' League, with headquarters in Salt Lake City, to tackle the problems of the Nisei marooned in Japan by the war. Many had been members of the League in the United States; most others knew it favorably. I was told I would find a few hundred whose citizenship was in doubt through some wartime act. But I found thousands. A single news item I inserted in the Nippon Times, one of the two long-established English-language dailies in Japan, with a circulation of 50,000, brought so many inquiries and appeals that they swamped the paper's office.

It was evident that organized action had to be taken. A group of us, Nisei and Caucasian Americans, hastily formed a local committee of the U.S. League. We held conferences with the U.S. consul, who represents the United States in all citizenship matters, and with officials of the Japanese Foreign Office who handle citizenship from their side. Both reported to us that they were as swamped with appeals as the office of the Times. The American consul said the office was months behind in processing the flood of applications to determine U.S. citizenship.

The size and complexity of the problem astonished me. Over 10,000 Ameri-

THE NISEI IN JAPAN

can-born youngsters had been caught in Japan when the war broke out, going to school or visiting relatives, with or without their parents; and practically all the English-speaking among them wanted to go back home to the United States. The large number—10,000—struck me as so unusual I wondered if there had not been an exodus of Japanese families from the United States in fear of war. But I was assured it was normal. At almost any time over the last twenty years, since the bars were put up on Oriental immigration by the 1924 exclusion act, thousands could be found traveling back and forth over the Pacific. Japanese relatives could not come to the United States; family ties were stronger than with Western peoples; fares were cheap; the whole family could go to visit the old folks at home. Denial of U.S. citizenship to Japanese aliens helped keep stronger the old-country ties. Many wanted their youngsters to get a partial Japanese education so as not to forget the land of their ancestry. Thousands of American-born children were therefore sent to relatives to go to school in Japan, though they would return home later to the United States—a group known among Japanese Americans as Kibei.

Considering that the total population of Japanese ancestry in the United States and Hawaii is the largest of any Oriental minority, 300,000, the 10,000 American-born visiting in Japan did not seem unreasonably large. But certainly no other racial or national minority in the United States is given to such visiting of the old country, and comparatively the numbers were astonishing.

Equally striking was the loyalty to the United States of almost all these youngsters who had been through the war emotions of a country to which they were tied by race and the citizenship of their parents. I reflected that not a single case of open disloyalty had marked the Japanese

and Japanese Americans in the United States during the war, though thousands were embittered by the military evacuation from the Pacific Coast and confinement in concentration camps. In Japan during the war hundreds of Nisei boys and girls had yielded to pressure and served in the army or governmental posts. I met many of them. Almost with a single voice they said that they couldn't help it; they were young and caught in social pressures or forced to serve. (Even many of those who had renounced their U.S. citizenship in the wartime camp for the "disloyal" at Tule Lake, California, and had voluntarily gone back to Japan, now expressed regret, inquiring eagerly of me as to the prospects of a decision by the U.S. Supreme Court voiding the renunciations as coercive. If the court does void them, it will restore citizenship not only to over a thousand now in Japan but to five thousand more in the United States who more promptly regretted their action taken under the duress of camp detention and remained.)

I repeatedly asked all these youngsters so eager to get back to the United States why they felt so strong a tie. I expected confessions of desire for a more prosperous life in the United States or some indication of shame in living in a defeated country which was not theirs by birth or, if not such simple feelings, some intimation that they felt maladjusted among their Japanese relatives and friends.

What I got in overwhelming response was the feeling that the United States was their real home because there they felt free. Japanese life, despite the real changes toward democracy under the Occupation, is still bound by the restraints of family and group hierarchy. These English-speaking youngsters, who were old enough to sense American life before they went to Japan, were infected by the virus of opportunity, of free choice, of an indi-

COMMON GROUND

vidualism which hardly exists in Japan. The sentiment of returning to the land of their birth would not be powerful enough to produce so profound a desire if that land did not have a meaning in terms of personal fulfillment.

But half the 10,000, according to the estimates of the U.S. consul, will have to get what fulfillment they can in the new Japan. They have lost their U.S. citizenship and can never return, except in the unlikely event that the laws are changed. Their tragedy is that most of them lost it without intent. There are four acts which will deprive any American abroad of his citizenship: serving in a foreign army, voting in a foreign election, taking a job open only to the nationals of a foreign country, and becoming naturalized. All of these youngsters knew that they would lose citizenship by army service; some knew they would by voting; but few knew about the jobs. While many lost their U.S. nationality in one of these three ways, more lost it by being naturalized as Japanese without their knowledge—a procedure possible only in Japan and Far Eastern countries with the same family system.

In Japan naturalization consists in mere registration with a local official, signed by a personal seal. Everybody in Japan has a seal like a rubber stamp, made of stone. The father, as head of the family, has custody of all the seals. The father has—or had until the law was lately changed in the democratization process—complete authority to decide the citizenship of his children up to thirty years of age. He could take the seals, make the registrations, and accomplish the surrender of U.S. citizenship without ever consulting his children. Great numbers did. Besides that traditional process, applications for food rations and jobs in wartime Japan were often handled the same way by the head of the family, and such applications

carried with them a declaration of Japanese citizenship. Hundreds of American-born boys and girls who learned later the consequences protested what their fathers had done. The American consul could do nothing to undo their acts; the Japanese government recognized them as citizens. This was not dual nationality, such as thousands of American-born children of foreign-born parents hold: it was the outright surrender of American citizenship.

Their case is not hopeless. A remedy appears to have been found in co-operation with the Japanese government. Our new JACL chapter in Tokyo was advised to have the youngsters bring suits in the Japanese courts to annul the acts of their fathers which they had not approved. Where the courts act favorably, the United States will recognize citizenship, and they can come home. The League has enlisted the lawyers necessary, and clients will not be lacking in abundance. I have never seen more eager plaintiffs in a lawsuit than these boys and girls.

But there is no remedy for those who lost their citizenship by army service, voting, or taking jobs open only to Japanese. The injustices of their position are painful because so technical. Nisei boys who entered the armed services did so under great pressure in most cases; they were not drafted. But they knew it meant the end of U.S. citizenship. Yet other boys, who rendered civilian service to the army, doubtless thinking it meant the same sacrifice, found later that U.S. law saved their citizenship. Such war jobs in Japan, as with us, were often filled by aliens needed as interpreters and so were not "employment open only to Japanese." These young men, no different in their wartime confusions from those with a uniform, can come back while the ex-soldiers cannot.

No less unjust are the distinctions be-

THE NISEI IN JAPAN

tween those who took civil jobs open only to Japanese and those who took others. They did not know the technical difference. I met young Japanese American women who had taught school in Japan during the war only to discover when they came to claim their U.S. citizenship that those in public school jobs had lost it while those in private schools kept it. When they were seeking jobs, nobody had told them the distinctions. Only lawyers conversant with U.S. nationality laws could have advised them, and they were few. On moral grounds of loyalty, all the teachers are the same, but one group will come back to friends and relatives in the United States and the other will be forced to remain in Japan.

An almost equal ignorance of law marked many who voted under the Occupation, in their enthusiasm, as one of them put it to me, to help General MacArthur democratize Japan. They thought they were doing something to promote "Americanism," only to find it lost them their citizenship. Scores were grief-stricken when the U.S. consul to whom they applied for U.S. papers told them the cost of their enthusiasm.

Of the 5,000 who probably have kept their citizenship, about half have now been cleared by our consuls. Hundreds are waiting to be processed at the two consulates at Yokohama and Kobe. Our consular officials are sympathetic and considerate. They go as far as the law and State Department rulings permit; doubtful cases are referred to Washington for decision. But the law leaves little room for hope for many who at heart are loyal Americans and yet who in ignorance, confusion, or pressure of war became, for the most part, unwilling Japanese.

So far, however, few of the Nisei with the right to return to the United States have done so. There are many difficul-

ties—lack of transportation, the transfer of funds, etc. In the meantime, once the all-important matter of *establishing the legal right to return* to the United States has been taken care of, there is the very definite lure of staying on in Japan for the time being to work for the Occupation. The Nisei are, of course, exceedingly valuable aides to the U.S. authorities. Their bilingual abilities open jobs as interpreters, translators, and censors—fields requiring an immense staff. The demand is so great that the shortage of educated bilingual Nisei residents in Japan of the right ages has obliged the Occupation to recruit more in the United States. One has only to glance through the special Occupation telephone directory in Tokyo for American officials, sprinkled liberally with Japanese names, to appreciate the importance of Nisei service.

I met the Occupation Nisei everywhere in Japan. They are at home with both Americans and Japanese, among whom almost all have some relatives. They constitute a bridge between Americans and Japanese invaluable in the process of democratization. They are not always popular with all Japanese officials and agencies, however. Some are regarded as too cocky and condescending, and considerable evidence indicates that in relation to the Japanese they are frequently more self-consciously "American" than Caucasians. I was asked by Japanese newspapermen at a press conference, for instance, whether I could not do something to promote better manners among these Nisei, who they complained "order the Japanese around." I was obliged to reply that I had enough on my hands without trying to improve the manners of my countrymen of any origin.

Partial explanation for this behavior doubtless lies in the relative feeling of Japanese generally about their own country and the United States. America had

been, up to the regime of the militarists and the war anyhow, a sort of big brother from whom much was to be learned. It mastered the industrial arts which Japan imitated. American methods, books, the study of English above all other languages—these were evidences of a recognition of a certain superiority. Japanese had gone to the United States as farmers, tradesmen, domestics. Americans had gone to Japan as teachers, missionaries, businessmen. The Nisei play upon the Japanese attitude of looking up to America, accentuated now by the Occupation: they claim their “rights” as representatives of a “superior” western country.

I also heard complaints that the attitude of superiority has infected the Japanese themselves who work for the Occupation—and there are thousands on the payroll. Working for the boss is too great a temptation to put on airs to be resisted in a country given to hierarchy.

Something of the same condescension I found also among the groups known as the “returned students”—Japanese who studied in foreign colleges, mostly American. They have become westernized; they still speak English and read the Nippon Times. Aware that they represent the tendencies in Japan toward westernization and now “democracy,” some adopt a slightly superior role, enhanced by their far more easy contacts with Occupation officials. Points of social contact in Tokyo are organized in the Returned Students Association, the Harvard Club of Tokyo (and doubtless similar clubs for other colleges—this one was mine), and a new International Club with all the American fixings, including a snappy jazz band for tea dancing.

The Nisei have their own social center in Tokyo, and those in other cities were on the point of organizing when I left Japan. The Tokyo “Service Center,” or-

ganized during the war to aid Nisei escape the police and war pressures, now primarily helps them get back to the U.S. Its office is the local headquarters of the Japanese American Citizens' League.

The problems it tackles are not only those major difficulties I have outlined. All the personal troubles of the Tokyo Nisei land there. One that bulks large in feeling, if not numbers, is marriage. A lot of the Occupation Nisei, as well as Caucasian GI's and even officers, have fallen in love with Japanese girls and want to marry. But the Army in January 1947 put up bars. No marriage permits would be issued, an order said, except under special circumstances. Men with pregnant girls, even babies, pleaded for permits. They were not “special circumstances.” As soon as I was known to have taken up the problem with the military authorities, I was besieged. Callers, telephone clients, impassioned letter-writers, all besought my aid. Groups got together, indignation meetings were held, with the single purpose of legalizing what was already in fact done. The Army was unsympathetic. No argument that the Army was compounding sin and illegitimacy prevailed over the contention that the Oriental exclusion act forbade bringing Japanese wives to the United States, and the Army was determined to save the boys from leaving stranded wives behind them.

I argued the case of the Mme. Butterflies with high officers. They felt it was a job for Congress, not them. Fortunately Congress did act just before adjournment in 1947 under the pressure of a Japanese American lobby, authorizing the admission of Oriental wives like other GI brides if they acquired that happy status within thirty days of passage of the bill (July 1947). Almost a thousand, two-thirds Nisei, married at once. The boys who have wanted to marry after that are out of luck in getting permits, if the Army

MISSOURI STUDENTS WANT PROGRESS IN RACE RELATIONS

sticks to its moral purpose and Congress does not again extend relief.

Marriages are only a minor symbol of the unprecedented alliance of conqueror and conquered engaged in one of the most extraordinary experiments in history. The sense of genuine co-operation in creating a Japan demilitarized and democratized is everywhere in evidence. Acceptance by most of the Japanese of the new direction as their salvation from the evils that led them to war is one of the most unexpected and hopeful results of defeat and occupation. The basis of the Japanese attitude seems to be: the better nation won; let us try its way. The Nisei know the American way and represent therefore a force to promote it. Despite the degree of separateness inherent in their differing cultural experience, the essential bond of the Nisei with Japanese tradition remains. It is evident even in those in the United States. Mutual interpretation between the Japanese and the Occupation is the natural consequence, transcending the irritations of Nisei Americanism. The Nisei are in effect ambassadors of the democratic spirit. Even if half of them return to the United States, they and those remaining will represent in the reorganization of Japanese life and institutions an

invaluable aid to a great and revolutionary process.

The future will see, I think, an even greater fraternity between Japan and the United States, not as an ally in any possible war but as a democratic partner. Reaction seems sufficiently broken in Japan to be beyond immediate recovery. Communism has a very limited appeal where democracy works to satisfy reasonably the claims and hopes of the masses of the people. When we wipe out our greatest offense to the Japanese—the Oriental exclusion act of 1924, surely to be repealed in the not distant future—we will insure an equality convincing to the Japanese and the world of our claims to democratic leadership. In that achievement the role of the Nisei, both in Japan and the United States, will have played a dramatic part.

Roger Baldwin, director of the American Civil Liberties Union, visited Japan and Korea last year at the invitation of General MacArthur to survey civil liberties in the occupied areas. He also carried a mission from the Japanese American Citizens League to help the Nisei stranded in Japan as a result of the war.

MISSOURI STUDENTS WANT PROGRESS IN RACE RELATIONS

WILLIAM C. HARRISON

EARLY this year the public of Columbia, Missouri, was invited to a University of Missouri auditorium to hear an English instructor from a neighboring school review a book. So? Well, the reviewer, Mrs. Hazel McDaniel Teabeau, was the first

of her race to be allowed a public hearing in a Mizzou building in the University's 109-year history. A large, friendly audience applauded her lecture on Willard Motley's novel, *Knock on any Door*.

Pleased surprise at the precedent-shat-

COMMON GROUND

tering change in University policy was the dominant note at the meeting. One of the most pleased and surprised persons was Ed Banks, president of the Unitarian Liberal Club, a nonsectarian campus organization, which sponsored Mrs. Teabeau's appearance.

"I made out the usual request form," said Ed, "expecting it to be turned down the same as others we had submitted for Negro speakers. In fact we went ahead with arrangements for the meeting at a local church—had even mailed out a hundred invitations giving that location—when Vice-President Brady called me into his office just six days before the meeting and said we could use the library auditorium." The program's publicity was quickly switched to take advantage of the unexpected ruling.

Ed felt that the new policy resulted from growing demonstrations of a fair-play sentiment on and off the campus since last November. At that time when students planned to invite delegates from all other colleges and universities in the state to a three-day mock United Nations conference, a University administration spokesman warned the planners not to invite representatives of Negro schools.

Student indignation ran high and protests were loud. When a preconference parade of floats representing various United Nations wound through Columbia's main streets, an unscheduled float attached itself to the end. Several students with blackened faces trailed the parade in a jeep bearing a placard "The Uninvited." But the conference was held with only white schools represented. Lincoln University in Jefferson City, the state's Negro "equal" of the University of Missouri, Stowe Teachers' College for Negroes in St. Louis, and Lincoln Junior College for Negroes in Kansas City did not participate.

The jeep-riding students and half a

dozen of their equally riled friends spearheaded a widespread movement on the campus. They banded together to give voice to the indignation provoked by the race bar which had been erected before the mock UN conference. They did not have time or inclination to move cautiously, not even to organize formally. Without group funds, they spent their own for posters and mimeograph supplies, and worked feverishly till three or four o'clock in the mornings, lettering protest posters for campus bulletin boards, mimeographing leaflets, writing letters, gathering facts.

Members of the group belonged to various organizations on and off campus and persuaded these to join the protesting. Large, brightly lettered posters greeted visiting delegates at every turn, posters bearing such messages as: UN DELEGATES, HALT! CHECK YOUR PIGMENTATION. Delegates were met individually and given the facts behind the Jim-Crow aspect of the conference. Publicity was channeled to state papers and some out-of-state publications. Four hundred posters were used on the campus and in the hotels where the delegates were lodged.

"This meeting is supposed to be a reproduction of a United Nations Assembly session. To bar Negroes is sheer arrogance," said Vernon Nash, guest speaker at one of the conference meetings. Nash, a former journalism teacher at the University of Missouri, now lives in Greenwich, Connecticut, and lectures on behalf of the United World Federalists.

Said Frederick A. Middlebush, president of the University of Missouri, who was present at the same meeting, "As I interpret the constitutional provision calling for separate schools, I believe it also calls for segregation in affairs of this nature." The remarks of both men were quoted in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and other papers through the state.

MISSOURI STUDENTS WANT PROGRESS IN RACE RELATIONS

The part of the state constitution (Art. IX, Sec. 1) which Dr. Middlebush interpreted as requiring segregation at the mock UN conference reads: "Separate schools shall be provided for white and colored children except in cases otherwise provided by law." The St. Louis Star-Times in an editorial headed "Discrimination at Its Narrowest" pointed out that nothing in that sentence of the constitution suggests that Negroes be barred from conference activities or from visits to the campus.

Other editors noted that the constitution, newly adopted in 1945, provides that the legislature may end race segregation in schools and suggested that the time for such action is now.

Aroused conference delegates formed a State Intercollegiate UN Assembly which would include Negro schools and passed a resolution to meet in the future only at schools where Negroes could participate. After passage of the resolution, the posters were taken down and agitation ceased for the remainder of the conference—to the vast relief of the host UN group, caught between desire for a successful conference and recognition of the incongruity of a color ban in such an assembly. In the early hours of the conference, the visiting schools had even considered a Russian walk-out in protest against the enforced discrimination.

The jeep riders decided to organize and carry on their campaign, looking to the end of racial segregation altogether at the University. They quickly attracted followers when they joined the Columbia chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and were unified by the NAACP chapter as an Interracial Committee to work with campus problems not only at the University but also at Stephens and Christian, two junior colleges for women in Columbia.

Slow-talking, level-headed Don Moeller, a married veteran in the University, was made chairman of the committee. Townspeople, faculty members, and students from the three college campuses and from high schools, both white and Negro, joined the committee in growing numbers. Their published purposes are the betterment of race relations in educational institutions in Columbia, the support of "any racial tolerance movement on any campus," and they pledge their time and effort to "individual and immediate problems."

One of the first problems they faced after the mock UN assembly was that of Negro exclusion in conference athletics. That matter was brought to a head when the student body of the University of Nebraska, a fellow member of the Missouri Valley Intercollegiate Athletic Association (then called the Big Six conference), threatened to withdraw because their Negro athletes were not permitted to play in games at Columbia, Missouri, and Norman, Oklahoma.

The student council at the University of Missouri, spurred to action by demands of fellow students led by the Interracial Committee, passed a resolution favoring participation in athletic events at the University by any student in good standing at a Big Six college or university.

Actually the student council's function is almost solely that of official representation of student body opinion. Policy matters, interpreted by the University administration, are controlled by a board of curators, with final authority resting in the state constitution, laws, and legislature.

The Interracial Committee then began to fan student interest in a special election which the student council set for January 15 of this year. The following questions were on the ballot: Is your legal residence in the state of Missouri? Do you favor the participation of Negroes on

COMMON GROUND

visiting athletic teams which play at the University? Do you favor the participation of Negroes in extracurricular events at which the University is host?

A fourth question was considered but did not appear on the ballot because the student council felt it might prejudice response to the other questions. It was: Do you favor the admission of Negroes to the University of Missouri?

The poll resulted in a four-to-one sweep in favor of Negro participation in extracurricular affairs and athletic events at Mizzou.

Negro exclusion is no new problem for the University of Missouri. In a famous case, Lloyd L. Gaines, a St. Louis Negro, in 1936 sought court aid in an attempt to enter the University's School of Law. The case went to the Supreme Court of the United States, which ruled in 1938 that the state must either provide equal educational facilities for Negroes or allow them to attend universities now open only to non-Negroes. The state proceeded to establish the Lincoln University School of Law in St. Louis. Gaines' counsel, however, pressed for his admission to the University of Missouri, contending that the educational standards of the newly created law school for Negroes did not compare favorably with those of the University. The case was dismissed in 1940 after Gaines disappeared and could not be found.

Soon after the Supreme Court decision in the Gaines case, Lucile Bluford, a Kansas City Negro newspaperwoman, tried unsuccessfully three times to enter the University of Missouri for graduate

study in journalism. As a result of those attempts, the letter of the law was met by establishing certain journalism courses at Lincoln University and dropping certain others at the University of Missouri.

Things have changed since then, and war-educated veterans on the campus want to see some of the things they thought they were fighting for put into practice.

The students at Mizzou, oldest state university west of the Mississippi River, followed with intense interest the Oklahoma-Fisher case recently before the United States Supreme Court. They felt the court's decision might hasten legislative action to end segregation in Missouri's institutions of higher learning. Proud of their school's progressive traditions, they were disappointed that Arkansas and not Missouri was the first of the so-called southern states to open its university doors to Negro graduate students after the Oklahoma-Fisher decision. The time is ripe, they believe, for Missouri to take that first step, and they are eager to show their fellow Missourians and their legislators how they, the students, feel about segregation and discrimination in schools. They point to the end of the University's no-Negro-speakers policy as a significant straw in the wind.

Since his graduation from high school in Bentonville, Arkansas in 1936, William C. Harrison has been a civil servant in Washington, D.C., and a B-24 pilot in Italy. He will receive his A.B. and B.J. (journalism) degrees from the University of Missouri in July of this year.

THE EGG MAN

JEAN PARADISE

WHEN the egg man rang the bell, Evelyn was, as usual, preparing her small son's lunch. She turned the gas low in the broiler, hoping the lamb chop wouldn't burn, and hurried to the front door, grabbing her purse on the way.

"Morning, Mrs. Silver. Nice day, ain't it?" the egg man said. He was a youngish, light-haired man with a plain face and a stubble of sandy beard. He handed her the two cartons of eggs and the pound container of butter and stood there, waiting.

"Yes, lovely day," Evelyn said.

As she fumbled in her purse, the egg man remarked, "Butter's up four cents this week."

"Again?"

She looked at him unhappily, and the egg man gave a plaintive shrug. "Lady, it ain't my fault. The price went up all over."

She shouldn't buy from him any longer, Evelyn thought. It was an extravagance, but both Jack and Teddy liked that whipped butter, and the eggs were unusually fresh. Mrs. Flynn, her next-door neighbor, had been dealing with the egg man for years and had recently sent him over to Evelyn. For that gesture of friendliness Evelyn was deeply appreciative. She was a newcomer to this neighborhood and a Jew. She had been uncertain of her welcome. Even such simple things as conversation over a back yard clothesline or the lending of a cup of flour or having a tradesman recommended assumed unusual significance.

Evelyn was thinking about her neighbors and the price of the butter and the chop in the stove while she handed the egg man the only bill in her purse. She took the eggs and butter over to a chair, and, when she came back, the man handed her two one-dollar bills and some coins.

Evelyn frowned. "Oh, this isn't right."

"You give me five dollars," the egg man said.

"No, it was ten. That was all I had, a ten-dollar bill."

The egg man shook his head positively. "No, it was five, missus. I put it here, with all these bills. When I get a ten, I put it in my wallet all the time."

He took out the thick roll of bills, held together by a rubber band, and then showed her his wallet with three tens in it.

Evelyn thought she recognized her own ten-dollar bill in the clean one on the end. Of course that was rather silly, but still her bill had been fairly crisp and clean. And it was a ten—of that she was sure. She couldn't remember looking at the bill before handing it to the egg man, but the night before she had counted the housekeeping money that remained in her purse. There had been the ten and some change.

She was a very good housekeeper, not at all flighty or scatterbrained, and she usually knew, to the penny, how much money she was carrying. With prices soaring the way they were now and Jack's salary pegged to the same low level, she had to be efficient and careful; and she was.

"I'm sure you're mistaken," Evelyn said levelly to the egg man. "Isn't there any way you can check up?"

"When I get all through, I add up my cash and then I'd know if I was short or over," he told her.

"Well, you'll see, you'll find yourself five dollars over," Evelyn said. "You might as well give me the money now so you won't have to make a trip back here."

She sounded so sure of herself that the egg man hesitated and then sullenly peeled a five-dollar bill off his roll and handed it to her. But the next moment he said sharply, "I tell you what, missus, I'll go out to the car and figure out what I sold so far. It'll only take me a couple minutes. That okay?"

"Of course," Evelyn said.

She watched him as he walked to his car and slid into the front seat. Teddy, her two-year old who had come in from the back yard while she was talking to the egg man, now stood in the living room, his feet planted wide apart, gazing at her with interest.

"What does the egg man want, Mommy?" he asked.

"Nothing," Evelyn said.

She picked Teddy up and took him into the kitchen to wash his hands. For once he didn't struggle or protest. When she was finished with him, Teddy reached for a cup lying on the drainboard of the sink and proceeded to fill it with water and empty it again.

Evelyn turned the gas off entirely and, leaving Teddy at the sink, returned to the front door. The egg man was humped over the steering wheel of his car, figuring with pencil and paper.

His name was Sundstrom, and he was a Scandinavian. That was all Evelyn knew about him. There were quite a few Scandinavians in this neighborhood and an even greater number of Irish. Nearly all the children on her particular block went

to St. Catherine's parochial school. Every afternoon Evelyn watched the groups of school children racing home, the boys in their dark blue pants and the girls in their blue skirts and white middie blouses.

Evelyn had been dubious about buying the house, but it was reasonably priced, and she and Jack had been desperate. So far, things had turned out fairly well. Teddy played with the Flynn children next door, she herself was on good terms with the neighbors, and the house was satisfactory. Still, she was jumpy at times, and sensitive, and perhaps on the defensive. As hard as she tried, she couldn't prevent embarrassing things from happening, like the incident of the nuns.

That had been last week. She was in front of the house trimming the small, straggly hedge with Teddy and seven-year old Dorothy Flynn watching her, when the two nuns walked past.

Teddy must have seen nuns before, but at a distance, without really noticing them. Anyway, there he was, bored with hedge-trimming, sucking his thumb and doing nothing, when the nuns walked by so close that one of the voluminous black skirts swirled around the little boy's head.

Teddy stared, while his mouth gaped open. Then entrancement lighted up his face, and he ran to Evelyn shrieking joyfully, "Look, Mommy, two witches."

Evelyn could not speak, could not answer. The nuns heard of course. They turned around and stared coldly at the child and at her. Evelyn didn't blame them.

She wished she could run up to them and explain. It was the fault of the story-books, naturally, "Hansel and Gretel" in particular. Anyhow, the nuns did look something like witches with their black hoods and the black, flowing skirts. How was a baby to know the difference?

As if in a dream, she heard Dorothy

THE EGG MAN

Flynn squeaking away in her high-pitched voice.

"Oh, Teddy," Dorothy said, gasping, "that's a terrible thing to say. It's just awful!"

"Now, Dorothy, he didn't mean to say anything bad," Evelyn remonstrated. She knelt down on the sidewalk and pulled Teddy over to her. "Darling, those aren't witches," she said smoothly. "They're called nuns."

The little boy gazed at her with large, guileless eyes. He shook his head stubbornly. "No, witches, I saw them, they're witches."

Dorothy squeaked again. Then she whirled and ran as fast as she could across the walk to her own house. She was going to tell her mother of course.

Evelyn drew a deep, uneven breath and tried again. "Teddy, darling, listen—they're sisters," she said.

Teddy's lip began to quiver. "No, they're brothers!" he contradicted.

To her complete dismay, Evelyn discovered that she was laughing. Not that there was anything to laugh about; this was probably hysteria. Finally getting control of herself, she went into the house, pulling Teddy after her.

She didn't meet either Dorothy or Mrs. Flynn for the rest of the day, and that night, after Teddy was in bed, she told the story to her husband. Jack grinned.

"It really isn't funny," Evelyn said. "All day long I've been thinking of those stories about Jews drinking children's blood, that nonsense that used to start pogroms. You know how things begin!"

She was near tears. Jack took her hand and patted it. "Evelyn, be sensible. Mrs. Flynn is a nice woman, and Irish people do have a sense of humor. Why don't you talk to her tomorrow and explain? You could even show her the 'Hansel and Gretel.' And then throw that damn book

away. Why should Teddy listen to stories about witches eating up kids? Probably gives him nightmares."

"He loves it," Evelyn said wanly.

Nevertheless, the next day she did speak to Mrs. Flynn. She watched from her kitchen window until she saw her neighbor go out to the clothesline in the yard, and then Evelyn walked out too, lugging the garbage pail. Teddy was playing in the yard with his toys.

Mrs. Flynn nodded to her cheerfully. "Good morning there!"

"Good morning," Evelyn said. She set down the garbage pail, pounded the cover on tight and then walked to the fence.

"I sure hope these clothes get dry," Mrs. Flynn said as she shook out a towel. "Seems like my wash gets bigger every week."

"I don't think it will rain," Evelyn said optimistically.

"Oh, yes, my corn hurts and that's a sure sign."

Evelyn took a deep breath and then asked, "D-did Dorothy tell you about Teddy and the nuns?"

"You mean the witches?" Mrs. Flynn threw back her head and laughed heartily. "She certainly did. I never laughed so much in my life. I told my husband about it when he came home last night, and we both nearly had a fit laughing."

Evelyn felt relief gushing through her, sweet blessed relief. She could have hugged and kissed Mrs. Flynn, that wonderful, understanding woman. But instead she only smiled at her warmly and, resting her arms on the fence, began to chatter. "It's the fault of the storybooks, I'm afraid. Teddy loves the books and his imagination sometimes runs away with him. The funniest part of the whole thing was the look on his face. He was so delighted to see the witches come to life."

Mrs. Flynn stooped for some clothespins and then looked over at Teddy who

COMMON GROUND

was delivering a monologue as he raced his toy fire engine over the bumpy grass. She shook her head in admiration.

"He certainly is a bright child," she said. "I always tell my husband that Teddy is the smartest youngster around here, sharp as a whip. But I suppose that's natural; so many of you people are smart."

Evelyn stood very still. Mrs. Flynn went on hanging her clothes, a row of children's overalls, some worn polo shirts and pajamas, and then a long line of small white pants.

She hung the last piece on the line, picked up her basket, and smiled at Evelyn again in the friendliest way before she went into the house.

That was last week. Now Evelyn watched the egg man stride back up the walk, taking the house steps two at a time. She opened the door for him.

"I figured out where each of my tens come from," he said abruptly. "You made a mistake, missus. You give me a five, not ten. Mrs. Flynn next door give me a ten, and lady on the next block, name of Mrs. Donnelly, and Mrs. Larsen next to the drugstore. You give me a five."

She knew she was not mistaken. Yet she could only stare at him, and the man stared right back. He had pale eyes, almost yellow. She had never noticed that before. Swiftly it came to her that even if he found out he was wrong, he would never admit it now; he had gone too far out on a limb. Besides, he knew she was licked; they always know.

She had the five dollars in her possession, and she didn't have to give it back. She thought that if she were not Jewish, she would stick to her rights. But being Jewish made everything quite different. She winced inwardly, thinking of the story that would be circulated around the block, from the egg man to Mrs. Flynn to Mrs. O'Toole across the street.

Evelyn took the five-dollar bill and handed it back to the egg man. Hurriedly he placed it in his roll of bills, snapping the rubber band as he did so. Then he parted his lips in what was intended to be a smile.

"See you next Wednesday," he said.

Evelyn nodded. But after the egg man had gone down the steps, she suddenly caught herself up with a start. Opening the door, she called after him, "Egg man, don't come back! I won't need anything from you again!"

But either she hadn't called loudly enough or else he was too far away. With a feeling of frustration she saw him slam the door of his car, and the next moment he had rolled down the street and was out of sight.

"Mommy, I want lunch," Teddy shouted from the kitchen. He had splashed water all over the floor and stepped in it, leaving big black smears on the linoleum. Evelyn picked him up distractedly and set him down with a thump on a kitchen chair.

She wondered whether she would have enough nerve to dismiss the egg man next Wednesday. No scenes, no rebukes, but no eggs either. He had no hold on her; he had nothing but her five dollars. An egg, after all, was an egg, and his were not so special. In fact he did not wash them thoroughly. Now that she thought of it, the eggshells were dirty, like the egg man himself, filthy, filthy dirty.

Jean Paradise has done advertising and newspaper work and wrote successfully for several years for the pulps. Abandoning this for more serious writing, she is now at work on a novel with an inter-racial theme.

IMMIGRANT—BLUE GUM

CHARLOTTE MILES

My friend, my tree, you living thing,
Fountain of courage, you I bless,
In vigor undiminishing,
Erect and calm in singleness.

What are your dreams I can but guess
From the soft movement of your crown,
The shadow of your silences
And sun and moonlight filtering down.

Both strangers we in this fair land
Have taken root and learned to grow;
Far is your native desert sand
And far my forest deep in snow.

When from the wintry heights the wind
Blows glacier-cool and virginal,
In leaning olive groves I find
An old delight and magical

Fulfillment of the blood, while you,
December bloom remembering,
In loosely pending leaves renew
The white, the bridal wreath of spring.

And so we meet and it is done,
We are alive, have taken root
To bear the change of moon and sun
In faith, in love, in gratitude.

This soil is ours; we want to keep
It sweet and clean, free to the sky,
And holy for our final sleep
When on the breast of earth we lie.

Born and educated in Germany, Charlotte Miles studied also in England and France. She contributed short stories, poems, and articles to various German periodicals until the advent of Hitler. She came to the United States in 1927 and is now a Californian, married to the artist, Harold Miles.

I GOT THE BLUES

ALAN LOMAX

*I got the blues,
But I'm too damn mean to cry . . .*

THE last chord sounded on Leroy's guitar, the last blues of the evening.

"Well," Natchez told me, "I reckon now you got an idea about the blues around Memphis."

"I reckon I have," I said.

"Yeah, that police in Memphis had you singin' the blues," he chuckled. About that time the hard-faced man who ran the honkey-tonk blew out the lamp. Old Natchez picked up the nearly empty gin bottle, Leroy and Sib grabbed the guitars, and the four of us walked out into the two o'clock dark. It was black out there. You could feel the Delta night rubbing itself against your cheek.

We sat down on the front step and smoked. The stars hung just above our heads, like fireflies caught in the dark tangle of the night. I felt good. Sib, Leroy, and Natchez had been singing for several hours, and every blues had been like another drink of raw gin. The brights and shadows of their blues reflected the wonderful and hateful land of the South that had produced all of us. We were warmed with the undeniable vitality and humanity that the blues carry beneath their melancholy.

I wasn't sure exactly where I was and I didn't much care. The man who owned the little country tonk was named Hamp, they told me. This was Hamp's place, somewhere out in the Arkansas blackland across the river from Memphis. It was a

one-room shanty store that doubled as a country bar room at night, a place where the people who made the cotton in this fat land came to dance and gamble and commit a bit of friendly mayhem. Tonight it had been a refuge for the three blues musicians and myself—"where nobody gonna bother us," they said. "No laws or nothin'."

We had needed a hole to hide in. When we had come racing across the river bridge from Memphis into this dark plain, we had had the feeling that we were pursued, that we would like to keep on going right out of this world. We were running away from the Memphis police and their attitudes about human relations. Not that we had committed a crime; we had just forgotten, temporarily, that we were in the South.

I had hit Beale Street in Memphis about the first cool of the evening, and, as usual, had begun to poke around for folk singers. A Negro bartender told me I wasn't allowed in any of the Beale Street joints because of a new segregation ordinance. So I paraded Beale Street until I heard the music I wanted coming from a barber shop. Natchez and Leroy were playing their boxes to Sib's harmonica-blowing. When they had collected their tips, we sat down together in a vacant lot to talk blues, but a dribble-chinned Memphis cop interrupted our libations and harshly ordered us to move on. "We don't want no Washington Yankee foolin' around niggertown," he said. "If you like this nigger music, take it back North with

I GOT THE BLUES

you. We don't like it down here in the South."

With the cop pacing behind us, our feet dragged in a chain-gang walk up Beale Street. We piled into my car and headed out of town, and, by what was said, I knew that the Memphis cop had made these blues singers my friends. They tried to make a joke of the whole incident, but in the pauses between laughs Leroy kept saying, "Man, just as soon as I can rake and scrape money together, I'm gonna leave this country and they ain't never gonna see me down here again."

At Hamp's place we solaced ourselves with gin and with hours of the blues. Child of this fertile Delta land, voice of the voiceless black masses, the blues crept into the back windows of America maybe forty years ago and since then has colored the whole of American popular music. Hill-billy singers, hot jazz blowers, crooners like Crosby, cowboy yodelers—all these have learned from the native folk blues. Now the blues is a big, lonesome wind blowing around the world. Now the whole world can feel, uncoiling in its ear, this somber music of the Mississippi. And yet no one had ever thought to ask the makers of these songs—these ragged meistersingers—why they sang.

Now we sat together in the Delta night, smoking and saying little. Here was Natchez, who had helped to birth the blues forty years ago in this same Delta country. Here was young Leroy, making the blues for his own time. Finally here was Sib, the buffoon of the blues, who, like all fools, expressed in apish gestures the sorrows of life.

I turned to Natchez. You couldn't tell how old he was by looking at him. You just knew that he was old and strong, like the big live-oaks in these bottoms. "Natchez," I said, "tell me why you sing the blues."

There was a pause in which the insects

and little animals of the night joined together in the sound that is the earth breathing in its sleep. Then Natchez began in his grave and hesitant way.

"Some people say that the blues is—a cow wantin' to see her calf, but I don't say it like that. I say it's a man that's got a good woman that turns him down. Like when you sing—

*If you see my milk cow, tell her to
hurry home,*

*'Cause I ain't had no lovin' since she
been gone . . .*

Things like that happen, you know. You want to see your lovin' babe, you want to see her bad, and she be gone. That gives you the blues:

*I woke up this mornin' just about an
hour before day,*

*Reached and grabbed the pillow where
my baby used to lay. . . .*

Natchez paused and looked at Sib, the stutterer—Sib, the slightly addled one. On Sib's dark brow a frown was eternally in conflict with the clownish grin that twitched the corners of his mouth. No one could sing Sib's blues because they were a complete expression of Sib—his stammering speech, his wild and idiotic humors, his untrammelled fancy. Natchez, who treated him like a child, would yet sit back and play for an hour while Sib indulged in rhymes and stanzas which no other singer could ever invent. "So what do you think about it, Sib?" said Natchez softly. "You must have some reason why you have the blues."

Sib began to speak in his plaintive way, the words tumbling out of him in a rush as if he were afraid someone might interrupt him at any moment. "I'll tell you, Natchez, it really worries me to think I had a sweet little girl named Annie Belle. You know, we used to go to school together and grew along up together. So I

COMMON GROUND

wanted to love her and I axed her mother for her and she turnt me down. That cause me to sing the blues:

*Good mornin', little school girl,
Good mornin', little school girl,
May I go home wid you?
May I go home wid you?
You can tell your mama and your papa
That Sib's a little school boy, too. . . .*

"Her parents thought I wasn't the right boy for Annie Belle. They turnt me down, and then I just got to thinkin' and that started me to drinkin' and from that I got the blues."

Truly, they have sung ten thousand blues verses about lack of love. Open the big book of the blues and you will find all the bitterness, all the frustration, all the anger, and all the heartbreak that accompany love when people live precariously in the slums.

Sib went on spurting words, but Natchez interrupted him by directing the question to Leroy. "Now what do you think about the blues situation, old Leroy?"

"Tell you, Natchez, the blues have hope me a lot. Yes, sir, the blues will help a man. When I has trouble, when I'm feelin' low down and disgusted and can't be satisfied, you know how it is sometimes—

*I woke up this mornin' with the blues
all round my bed,
Went to eat my breakfast, had blues
all in my bread. . . .*

Then singin' a blues like that is the onliest thing to ease my situation."

But Natchez wasn't satisfied. "Yeah, you feel better. The blues helps a man to explain his feelin's, but why do he feel blue in the first place?"

"Here's my thought on it," Sib came busting in. "We er-uh colored people have had so much trouble, but we's a

people that tries to be happy anyway, you ever notice that? Because we never had so much, we tries to make the best of life. We don't have nothin', but we try to be jolly anyway; we don't let nothin' worry us too much. You take them old-fashioned country suppers." (As Sib talked, you could see him smacking his lips over the barbecued ribs and the field-ripe watermelons he had eaten.) "I thought I was a rich man when I'd go there with a dollar in my pocket. I never was used to much anyway, you understand? Always had to work."

He paused, and the puzzled and angry frown triumphed over the happy-go-lucky grin that twitched at his lips. "One year we cleaned up a whole big bottom where the willows was thick. The mud was so heavy I many times stalled four mules to a wagon down there. We'd work and clean up a bottom in the winter so we could plant it next summer. And I think this. You work hard all the year and you expectin' your money once a year, and, when that year wind up, you don't get nothin'; then you get the idea that 'I ain't doin' no good no way an' what's the use of livin'?' You know? You'll have all them funny thoughts like that."

Natchez, softly, "Sho, sho."

"And that gives you the blues, the po' man's heart disease. I remember I used to sing the blues down in that old black bottom—

*I could hear my name,
My black name, a-ringin'
All up an' down the line.
I could hear my name,
My black name, a-ringin'
All up an' down the line.
Now I don't believe I'm doin' nothin'
But gradually throwin' away my
time. . . ."*

Sib put his harmonica to his lips and began to play. It was hardly music. It was

I GOT THE BLUES

a compound of shrieks and squeals and moans, like a farm in a tornado, where the cries of terror from the animals and the human beings are mixed with the noise of splitting planks and cracking timbers, and all are swallowed up in the howl of the storm. The words and phrases burst out in spasms through the harmonica as if Sib had learned to sing through the metal reeds because he was unable to express his feelings adequately in his own throat. Presently Natchez and Leroy joined Sib, underscoring his harmonica with their two guitars, until the song had run out in him. In the silence that followed, they chuckled quietly together. "That's the blues, man. That's purely it."

"You see what I mean about the blues expressin' a man's feelin', Natchez?" said Leroy.

"Yeah," Natchez replied. "It looks like the blues gits started thataway—when a man is goin' down some country road, whistlin' and singin' to himself somethin' or another like—

Hey, I feel like hollerin' and I feel like cryin',

Hey, I feel like hollerin' and I feel like cryin'.

I'm here today, Lawd, but tomorrow I'll be gone,

I'm here today, Lawd, but tomorrow I'll be gone.

He don't play no instrument or nothin'. He just hollers about what's worryin' him."

"They the jump-up blues," added Leroy. "They just jump up in your mind when you be down in trouble. Like those little numbers like they have over in Tennessee." And Leroy began to sing in his rich baritone—

*"Well, have you ever been to Nashville,
Well, have you ever been to Nashville,
Have you ever been to Nashville,
O Lawdy, to the Nashville pen?"*

*Boys, if you don't stop stealin',
Boys, if you don't stop stealin',
Boys, if you don't stop stealin',
O buddy, you'll go back again. . . .*

That's what I mean about the heart part. You singin' the way you feel from the heart."

"That's right, man," from Sib.

"Nobody could play behind them jumped-up blues," said Natchez, "because they ain't got no music to 'em. They ain't never been wrote down and won't never be, and I reckon all blues originated from just such stuff as that."

Out of the lonesome field hollers, out of the chain-gang chants, out of the full-throated choruses of the road builders, the clearers of swamps, the lifters and the toters—out of the biting irony, the power and savage strength and anger of work-songs—sprang the blues. Here was music with its tap root in African singing—Africa, the continent of communal work, the preeminent continent of the work-song. The work-song flowered under slavery and put forth its thorns after reconstruction. Forty-odd years ago singers like Natchez began to set these old cadences "to music," making their banjos, their guitars, and their pianos sound the work-gang chorus. Thus the old work-songs, given a regular harmonic form, became dance music in the unstable and uncertain world of the southern Negro worker. Here, from the experience of Leroy and Natchez, had come confirmation for my own notions about the origin of the blues.

"You sing about things you want to do or things you want to know or—" Leroy continued—"things that really have happened to you."

"And," Natchez added, "some people that haven't had no hardship, they don't know how it is with the poor man that has had hardships and still has them."

"Yeah, classics and stuff like that," said Leroy, lumping musicians who played

COMMON GROUND

written music with all the secure and wealthy and privileged people in the world. "People like that don't know what the blues is."

"Naw, they couldn't play the blues if they wanted to," Sib said with great scorn.

"What I mean," explained Leroy, "it takes a man who *had* the blues to really play the blues. Yeah, you got to be blue to sing the blues, and that's the truth:

*I was down in the bottom with the
mud up to my knees,*

*I was workin' for my baby, she was so
hard to please.*

*I worked all the summer, Lord, and all
the fall,*

*Went home to take my Christmas, good
pardner, in my overalls. . . ."*

Natchez scrooched up on the step and spat far into the night. He could spit like a muleskinner. His voice rang now with authority.

"Let's come to a showdown now. Just where did the blues originate from? I'm thinkin' they didn't start in the North—in Chicago or New York or Pennsylvania."

"Naw, man, they started in the South," from Sib.

"From slavery, I'm thinkin'," Leroy muttered, half to himself.

"All right, then what we really want to know is why and how come a man in the South have the blues. Now I've worked on levee camps, in road camps, and in extra gangs on the railroad and everywhere. I've heard guys singin'—'Mm-mp' this and 'Mm-mp' that—and they was really expressin' their feelings from their heart the only way they knowed how.

"I've knowed guys that wanted to cuss out the boss and was afraid to go up to his face and tell him what they wanted to tell him. And I've heered a guy *sing* those things to the boss when he were out behind a wagon, hookin' up the horses. He'd make out like a horse stepped on his foot

and he'd say, 'Get off my foot, goddamit!'—saying just what he wanted to say to his boss, only talkin' to the horse—"You got no business doin' me like that! Get offa my foot!"

"That's just my idea, Natchez," Leroy broke in. "The blues is mostly revenge. You want to say something (and you know how we was situated so we couldn't say or do a lot of things we wanted to), and so you sing it. Like a friend of mine. He was workin' down on a railroad section gang a long time ago. I don't remember when it was. Anyhow, this friend of mine looked at the boss lyin' up in the shade sleepin' while him an' his buddies was out there shakin' those ties. He wanted to say something about it, but he couldn't you know. So that give him the blues and he sung a little number about—

Ratty, ratty section,

Ratty, ratty crew,

The captain's gettin' ratty, boys,

I b'lieve I'm gonna rat some, too.

Meanin' that he was signifyin' and getting his revenge through songs."

"And he didn't quit because he didn't know where he gonna find his next job," Natchez added.

"Yeah, and maybe he had one of those jobs you couldn't quit." Leroy chuckled.

"What you mean? Sumpin' like a chain gang?" Sib asked.

"Naw, I mean one of the jobs only way you could quit was to run off," said Leroy.

"Man, how they gonna hold you?" from Sib, querulously.

"They hold you just like this, Sib, boy. You didn't have no payday on them jobs. They give you an allowance in the commissary store for you an' yo' woman. You draw on that allowance, so much a week, and after it was up, that's all you git. Most boys didn't know how to read and

I GOT THE BLUES

write and figger and so they charge them what they wants, like twenty-five dollars for a side of side meat. And you gonna stay there till you paid for that meat, Sib, maybe gettin' twenty-five cents a day wages. When you take a notion to leave, they tell you, 'Well, you owe us four hundred dollars.'"

"Four hundred dollars! Aw, be quiet, man." Sib started to laugh his mad and infectious laugh.

"I said four hundred dollars," Leroy cut in. "Just for eatin' and sleepin'."

Natchez took up the story. "Suppose you be workin' a team of mules and one git his leg broke and have to be killed? That's your mule, then! Yessir, that dead mule is one you bought and you gonna work right on that job till you pay for him or slip off some way."

"Whyn't you say somethin' about it?" Sib inquired plaintively.

"Say something about it and you might go just like that mule," Natchez said seriously. "All odds are against you, even your own people."

"That's right," agreed Leroy. "The white man don't all the time do those things. It's some of your own people at times will do those dirty deeds because they're told to do them, and they do what they're told."

Treat a group of people as if they had no right to dignity, allow these people no security, make them bend their knees and bow their heads, and some of them will conform to slavery in their souls. Perhaps these so-called "Uncle Toms" are the most grievous result of the slavery system.

Natchez interrupted my reflections. "Looky here, Leroy. Did you ever work for the Loran brothers?"

"You mean those guys that built all these levees up and down the river from Memphis? Sho, man, I've worked for the bigges' part of the Loran family—Mister Isum Loran, Mister Bill Loran, Mister

Charley Loran—all them. I think them Lorans are something like the Rockefeller family. When a kid is born, he Loran junior. They got Loran the second, Loran the third, Loran the fourth. They always been and they is now—Loran brothers—some of them big business mens in towns, some of them running extry gangs and levee camps and road camps. And they were peoples wouldn't allow a man to quit unless they got tired of him and drove him away."

"That's right," Leroy chuckled. "And you remember how the boys used to sing—

*I axed Mister Charley—
What time of day:
He looked at me,
Threw his watch away.*

*I axed Mister Charley
Just to give me one dime.
'Go on, old nigger,
You a dime behind!'*

*I axed Mister Charley
Just to give me my time.
'Go on, old nigger,
You're time behind!'. . ."*

I had heard this levee camp blues from one end of the South to the other. It was the epic of the muleskinner, the man who did the dirt-moving jobs before the bulldozer was developed, the Negro who, working his big mule-drawn scoop, piled up the levees, graded the roads, and dug the canals of the South. This muleskinning blues has thousands of verses, attached to the mournfulest wailing tune in the world, a tune I never was able to sing myself until they put me on K.P. in the Army, and the mess sergeant began to look like a levee camp boss looks to a muleskinner.

All the way from the Brazos bottoms of Texas to the tidewater country of Virginia I had heard Negro muleskinners

chant their complaint against Mister Charley but, although I had asked a score of singers, I had never found one who could identify him. I grinned with excitement. Maybe here, under the knee of one of the Loran brothers' levees, I had at last discovered the identity of my elusive Mister Charley.

I asked my second question of the evening. "Who is this 'Mister Charley'?"

"Mister Charley Loran," Natchez immediately responded.

"What sort of a man is he?" I asked.

"Well," Leroy drawled, "now I couldn't hardly describe him to you. You know, it's hard for a colored man to talk like a white man anyhow." (Leroy was talking for my benefit now. He had been reminded there was a white man listening there in the dark. He began to rib me gently.) "Mister Charley was one of them real Southerners; had a voice that would scare you to death whenever he'd come out with all that crap of his. Always in his shirt sleeves, I don't care how early in the mornin' and how cold it was."

"Night or day," Natchez began to chuckle with him. "Didn't make no difference to Mister Charley what time it was."

"Don't care how early he'd get up, you gonna get up, too. He'd holler—

*Big bell call you, little bell warn you,
If you don't come now, I'm gonna
break in on you. . . .*

And he meant it."

"Sho he did," laughed Natchez. "He the man originated the old-time eight-hour shift down here. Know what I mean? Eight hours in the morning and eight more in the afternoon."

Sib kept adding eight to eight and getting sixteen and going off into peal after peal of high whinnying laughter. In this shared laughter I felt the three had again accepted me. I asked another question.

"I'd always heard of this Mister Charley in the song as 'the mercy man.' Is he the same as Charley Loran?"

"Naw, man, that's Mister Charley Hulen, the best friend we had down in this part of the country, really a friend to our people. He was the man we all run to when somebody mistreated us," Natchez told me.

"Otherwise known as 'the mercy man,'" Leroy added. "Now I remember an incident about Charley Hulen happen in Hughes, Arkansas. It's hard to believe it, but I know it for a fact. They had a Negro there name Bolden, run a honkey-tonk and had a lot of property. In fact the sheriff of the county lived in one of Bolden's houses. But he wouldn't pay Bolden no rent, just stayed there and gave Bolden a whuppin' every time Bolden asked him for his money."

"That's what he did," said Natchez, listening, seeing it, feeling it in his guts.

"So this Bolden happen to be, as they say, one of Charley Hulen's niggers. He finally got up nerve to go tell Mister Charley what was goin' on. So Charley Hulen tells the police, say, 'Saturday evenin' at one o'clock, meet me. I'm killin' you or you kill me.' And that's what happen. He met that sheriff that Saturday and told him, 'I come to kill you. You been messin' with one of my niggers.'

"The police started after his gun and Charley Hulen shot him through the heart. So they pulled that police over out the street, and let the honkey-tonk roll on." Softly, seeing it, wondering about it, he repeated, "Yeah, man, let the old honkey-tonk roll *right* on."

"Toughest places I ever seen," said Natchez, "were some of them honkey-tonks, call them barrel-houses, in Charley Loran's camps. Negroes all be in there gamblin', you know, and some of them short guys couldn't quite reach up to the crap table—and I've seed them pull a

I GOT THE BLUES

dead man up there and stand on him."

"Yeah, stand on 'em. I've seed that," Leroy said.

But Natchez had more to tell. "Down in them barrel-houses in Loran's levee camps I've seen them stand on a dead man and shoot craps all night long; and I've heard Loran come around and say, 'If you boys keep out the grave, I'll keep you out the jail.' Yeah, and I've heard him say, 'Kill a nigger, hire another. But kill a mule and I'll have to buy another.'"

"That's just what he believed, Natchez," Leroy said, in anger and at the same time with curious pride. "Peoples like him had another word, too. On those camps, when the fellows were wore down from carrying logs or doing some kind of heavy work, the bosses used to say, 'Burn out, burn up. Fall out, fall dead!' That was the best you could do. You had to work yourself to death or you proved that you were a good man, that's all."

"Main thing about it is that some of those people down there didn't think a Negro ever get tired!" Natchez' ordinarily quiet voice broke with a sound that was half sob, half growl. "They'd work him—work him till he couldn't work, see! You couldn't tell 'em you was tired."

"Why couldn't you?" I asked.

"They'd crack you 'cross the head with a stick or maybe kill you. One of those things. You just had to keep on workin' whether you was tired or not. From what they call 'can to can't.' That mean you start to work when you just can see—early in the mornin'—and work right on till you can't see no more at night."

"Only man ever helped us about our work was Charley Hulen, the mercy man," said Leroy. "He used to come out and say, 'Those fellows are tired; give 'em some rest.' Ain't he the man, Natchez, cut them sixteen hours a day down to eight?"

"Right in this section he was," Natchez replied.

"How did he do it?" I asked.

"Why, he and his son, Little Charley, just didn't like the way things was going on, so they just come in and taken over, that's all. Otherwise they was the baddest men down through this part of the country. Both of them was ex-cowboys from Texas and sharpshooters. Could shoot like nobody's business. So after they taken over, that made it a lot better. And it's still better today."

"You mean the people were just scared of old man Hulen and his boy?" I asked.

"That's right," Leroy said. "I'll tell you how bad they was scared. You know they put up a law in Arkansas—no *hitchhikin'*. It made it kinda tough on a fellow to move around and change jobs if he wanted to. So, one afternoon I were hitchhikin' a ride to Little Rock and a fellow by the name of Mister Gotch stopped in his car. He were one of the baddest mens down in this country."

"He was so bad he was scared of hisself," Natchez chuckled.

"So Mister Gotch say to me, 'What you doin' hitchhikin', boy?' Called me 'boy.'"

"I say, 'I'm tryin' to get home to work.'"

"He say, 'Well, who do you work for?'"

"I tell him"—Leroy imitated the mild and insinuating way he made his reply—

"'I work for Mister Charley Hulen.' You know what that man told me? He say, 'Come on, I'll take you there!'"

Sib, Natchez, and Leroy threw back their heads and laughed, laughed quietly and long, as if they shared some old joke, burdened with irony, but bearable out of long acquaintance. "Any other time. . . . Or if you'd worked for another man. . . . Or if you hadn't been workin'. . . . You'd got a whuppin'. . . . Or went to jail or the farm and worked for no pay. . . . That's it, worked for no pay!" came bursting out

COMMON GROUND

between chuckles. "But, since I worked for Mister Charley Hulen, Mister Gotch taken me to his place. Scared to bother me, because I was one of Mister Charley's mens," Leroy went on.

"One of his *niggers*!"

"Yeah. So Mister Gotch took me in his car. Even gave me a drink!"

Natchez, shaking his head in wonder, chuckled. "They'll do that, too."

"You know, Leroy," Natchez said, "you and I worked in all kind of camps—levee camps, road camps, rock quarries and all—but what I want to get at is—how we lived in those places? I mean in tents and eatin' scrap food other people had refused, such as old bags of beans and stuff they couldn't sell."

Leroy, beginning to howl with laughter over the old and painful joke he recalled, interrupted, "And they had a name for it in the camp I was in—

La-la-loo!

*If you don't like it,
He do!"*

Natchez, chuckling with him, "Yeah, but you'll like it!"

"Unh-hunh, you might not like it when you first get there, but you'll like it before you leave." Leroy was still laughing.

Natchez went on, forcing us to savor the dirt, see the hoggish way the men had to live. "They'd just go out in those big truck gardens and pull up greens by the sackful, take 'em down to some lake or creek, sort of shake 'em off in the water, and cook 'em, roots, stalk, and all, in one of them big fifty-two gallon pots."

Leroy, beginning to laugh his big laugh again, broke in. "And if you found a worm in your greens and say, 'Captain, I found a worm here,' he'd say, 'What the hell you expect for nothing?'"

Natchez and Sib burst out in great yells of laughter, as Leroy hurried on to top his

own story: "And then some fellow over 'long the table would holler, 'Gimme that piece of meat!'"

"Yeah, I've heard that—'Gimme that piece of meat! Don't throw it away!'" Natchez gasped out between the gusts of laughter that were shaking his whole body. Sib couldn't sit still any longer; his laughter was riding him too hard. He went staggering off down the dark path, beating his arms in the air, squealing and guffawing like a wild animal.

When we had recovered from this healing laughter, Leroy added thoughtfully, "Those guys seemed to get a kick out of the whole thing."

"Well, in them times what did you know? What did you know?" Natchez asked the night and the stars.

*"Ham and eggs, pork and beans,
I would-a ate more, but the cook wasn't
clean."*

"Did you ever see those guys they called 'table-walkers'?" Natchez went on.

"Yeah, many times," said Leroy.

"I mean one of these guys had made up his mind he didn't care whether he died or no; was just tired of the way he'd been living and the kind of food he'd been eating. He'd snatch out his .45 revolver, get up on one end of the mess table and walk it, what I mean, walk right down the whole length, tromping his big dirty feet in everybody's plates, grabbin' up your food."

"Those guys were what you might call 'tough peoples,'" Leroy said respectfully.

"Yeah, 'cause they know they gonna get a whuppin' from the boss," Natchez agreed.

"He may have that .45, that so-called tough guy," Leroy went on, "but, when the white man come, he'll whup him with that .45 right on his hip. White man won't have no gun or nothin'. Just come in and say, 'Lay down there, fellow; I'm



gonna whup you.' " Leroy spoke quietly, with bitter, weary irony. "So this tough guy gonna lay right down and the white man would kick the gun out of his scabbard and give him a whuppin'." There was a pause. We could all see the big, black figure cowering on the earth and the white man standing over him with a stick, beating him as he might a chicken-killing hound. After a moment, almost in a whisper, Leroy continued, "After this table-walker get his whuppin', he'd pick up that big pistol he toted and go on back to work.

*Well, you kicked and stomped and beat me,
And you called that fun, and you called that fun.*

*If I catch you in my home town,
Gonna make you run, gonna make you run. . . .*

"Yeah," Natchez said. "Then maybe this guy that took the beating would come out there on the job and kill one of his buddies. I've seen that many times."

"If you were a good worker, you could kill anybody down there," Leroy added.

"What you mean is—" Natchez rapped this out—"you could kill anybody down there as long as you kill a Negro!"

"Any Negro." Leroy's voice was flat and painstakingly logical, as if he were reading the rules out of a book. "If you could work better than him and you were sorry! But don't go killin' a good worker!"

"That's right," said Natchez. "You could kill anybody you want in those days, if you could work better than him.

*Stagolee, he went a-walkin' in that red-hot broilin' sun;
He said, 'Bring me my big pistol, I wants my forty-one.'*

Stagolee, he went a-walkin' with his .40 gun in his hand;

*He said, 'I feel mistreated this mornin',
I could kill most any man.'*"

The small hot breeze of midnight had died away and the dawn wind had not yet begun to stir. The night wrapped around us a choking black blanket of stillness and quiet. The quiet voices of Natchez and Leroy moved on with the sureness and strength of the great river that had given them birth.

They were both entertainers. They had made their way safely and even pleasantly through their violent world, their guitars slung around their necks—like talismans. Wearing these talismans, they had entered into all the secret places of this land, had moved safely through its most dangerous jungles, past all its killers, who, seeing their talismans, had smiled upon them. They lived the magic life of fools. (Remember the hard drawling voice—"I got a nigger on my place that can keep you laughin' all day. I don't know where he gets all the stories he tells and them songs of his. Reckon he makes them up, nigger-like. And sing! Sing like a mockin' bird. You ought to hear him. You'd split your sides.") Now these buffoons with their clear artist's vision were making a picture of their world, a terrifying picture of which they were not at all afraid. They were at home with it.

"You know, Natchez," said Leroy, "we had a few Negroes around here that wasn't afraid of white people. They actually talked back to them. People like that they called 'crazy'—'crazy niggers.' I wonder why do they call them crazy and bad because they speak up for their rights?"

"They afraid they might ruin the other Negroes, make them crazy enough to talk back," said Natchez. "I had a crazy uncle and they hung him. My uncle was a man that, if he worked, he wanted his pay. And he could figger as good as a white man. Fact of the matter, he had a better

I GOT THE BLUES

education than some of them and they would go to him for advice."

Leroy chuckled. "Um-hum, a lot of the white peoples down here are about as dumb as we are."

"Anyhow," Natchez went on, "this is how they found out my uncle was really a crazy nigger. One day his white boss come to his house and told him, say, 'Sam, I want you to git that woman of yours out of the house and put her to work.' Say, 'It's no woman on this plantation sits up in the shade and don't work but Mizz Anne.'"

"An' my uncle say, 'Well, who is Mizz Anne?'"

"The white man tell him, 'Mizz Anne is my wife.'"

"My uncle say, 'Well, I'm sorry, Mister Crowther, but my wife is named Anne, too, and she sets up in the shade and she don't come out in the field and work!'"

"The man say, 'She got to come out there.'"

"My uncle look at him. 'There's one Mizz Anne that's a Negro and she ain't gonna work in the field.'"

"The white man jumps off his horse and my uncle whipped him and run him and his horse off his place." Natchez went on in a flat and weary voice to finish his story. "So the white man rode to town and he got him a gang and come back after my uncle. My uncle shot four or five of them, but they finally caught him and hung him. So that's the story of him! Yeah, that's the story of my crazy uncle."

"Lynched him," Sib muttered.

"Fifty or sixty of them come out there and killed him." Natchez began to speak with mounting rage. "That was on account of him trying to protect his own wife. Because he didn't want his own wife to work out on the farm when she had a new baby there at the house an' was expecting another one pretty soon!"

"I've seed this happen, too. One boy I

know was likin' the same girl a white man was likin'. The white man told the colored boy not to marry the colored girl, because he wanted her for hisself. The boy told him he loved the girl and was going to marry her, so the white guy say, 'You can't git no license here!'"

"Well, the boy and girl ran off to another town and they got married and then come back home. The white fellow asked if they was really married and they told him they were. Now this girl figger if she showed him the license he would leave her go. She showed him the license, so they went and got her husband and killed him. Then they come back and got her—she was in a fam'ly way—and they killed her. Then they went and killed the boy's daddy and they killed his mother, and then, one of the brothers, he tried to fight and they killed him. So they killed twelve in that one family. That family was named Belcher, and all this happened at a place they call Longdale, Arkansas, way out in the woods from Goulds, Arkansas."

Without any more feeling than one would recall a storm or a flood or any other past disaster, Leroy commented, "Yeah, I heard of that, heard all about it."

"It was no protection at all that the poor peoples got in places like that back in those days," Natchez went on with calm anger. "You try to fight back, then it's not just you they gonna get. It's anybody in your family. Like if I have three brothers and do something and they can't catch me, they'll catch the brothers."

"It don't matter to them—just anybody in the family," Leroy said.

"You might do things and get away. But why do something or another and get your whole family kilt? You know what I mean?"

"I know it!"

"That's what they got on you, see?"

"Yeah, that's what they got on you," observed Natchez. "And if your family

COMMON GROUND

have a girl they like, you might's well's to let them have her, because if you don't, they liable to do something outrageous. When they see a Negro woman they like, they gonna have her, if they want her, especially down here.

*If I feel tomorrow, like I feel today,
If I feel tomorrow, like I feel today,
Stand right here and look a thousand
miles away.*

*I'm goin' to the river, set down on the
ground;
I'm goin' to the river, set down on the
ground;
When the blues overtake me, I'll jump
overboard and drown.*

*I feel my hell a-risin', a-risin' every day;
I feel my hell a-risin', a-risin' every day;
Someday it'll bust this levee and wash
the whole wide world away. . . .*

"You know, they's another kind of Negro the white man call bad," Natchez went on. "A bad seed, a seed that ruins the rest of the Negroes, by opening their eyes and telling them things they don't know."

"Otherwise he is a smart Negro," Leroy chuckled.

"Yeah," said Natchez. "He would git the Chicago Defender, for an instance, and bring it down here and read it to the Negroes."

"Speakin' of the Chicago Defender," Leroy interrupted, "I were in a place once they called Marigold, Mississippi. They had a restaurant there and in the back they had a room with a peephole in the door. I thought it was a crap game goin' on back there and I went back to see. Fact of the business, I were kind of stranded and I wanted to shoot some craps and make me a stake, if I could.

"And you know what they were doin' back there? They were readin' the Chi-

cago Defender and had a lookout man on the door. If a white man had come in the restaurant, they'd stick the Defender in the stove. Burn it up. And start playin' checkers." Leroy laughed. "That's the way they had to smuggle the Defender down there. Now if they'd caught this fellow that brought the Defender, they'd have called him a bad nigger."

"Might-a killed him."

"Yeah. He was the kind they call a really bad Negro—a man that has the nerve to smuggle the Defender into Mississippi where they don't even allow the paper to be put off the train."

The Chicago Defender has more than a hundred thousand circulation among Negro readers. It is far from radical. It prints news about Negro life, much that does not appear in the non-Negro press.

"That's what makes the Negro so tetchious till today," Natchez said. "He have been denied in so many places until if a gang of guys is, for an instance, standing in some certain place and they say to them all, 'You fellas, git back and don't stand there,' the Negroes in the crowd figger they're pointin' straight to *them*. A lot of times they don't mean that. They really mean they don't want *nobody* standin' there, but the Negro thinks, straight off, they referrin' to him because he's black."

Sib had been listening to his two older friends for a long time. He had had no experience of the deeps of the South—the work camps, the prison farms, the wild life of the river that they had known. He was a boy right off the farm, whose half-mad genius on his Woolworth harmonica was gradually leading him out into the world.

But Sib knew how it was to feel "black and tetchious."

"Well, boys, I'll tell you what happen to me. My mother, she bought a mule from er-uh Captain Jack, who was the boss of the county farm at my home. It

I GOT THE BLUES

was a nice mule. But, by me bein' young—you know how young boys are?—I rode this mule down, run him, you understand. After all, Captain Jack didn't have nothin' to say. He'd done sold the mule to my mother. And this mule finally got mired up in the bottom."

"You say married? Is that the mule you married?"

"Naw, naw, mired, mired up in the mud."

"That must be the mule you bought the hat for," Leroy cracked, and all three men burst into guffaws of country laughter, while Sib kept stuttering his story.

"Naw, it ain't! Now listen! Just this old mule got mired up and died down there in the bottom."

"I understand."

"Yeah. So er-uh Captain Jack, he told my mother that he was just crazy to git his hands on that stuttering fool of hers. Which was me. Said he was gonna do me just like I did the mule. Get me out there on the gang and—"

"I understand," said Natchez, now grave.

"And my mother had to just scuffle to keep me offa that gang. Ever' little move I'd make, he was watchin' me. And, after all, he done sold the mule and she done paid him. But he say I killed the mule and—"

Natchez interrupted sharply. "You see the main point is that word they have down here—'Kill a nigger, hire another one. Kill a mule, buy another one.' All these things, everything we've talked about, all these blues and everything, come under that one word. Fact of the business, back not long ago, a Negro didn't mean no more to a white man than a mule."

"Didn't mean as much," said Leroy.

"A black man," Natchez went on, "to what they looked at, was just a black face. I knew a man (they call him Mister

White) had a plantation about fifty or sixty miles square and he didn't even want a Negro to come through his place. The government highway ran through his land, you know? What they call a pike, a main highway where everybody had to go, but he built a special road, ran all around his place, and when you got there it was a sign said 'NEGRO TURN.' You had to turn off the highway and go all around his plantation."

"I knew him, knew him well," Leroy muttered.

"And this Mister White had all white fences around his place. The trees, he painted them white as high as he could reach. All his cattle, his sheeps, goats, hogs, cows, mules, hosses, and everything on his place was white. Anytime one of his animals have a black calf or a black goat—whatsonever it was—Mister White give it to the niggers. Even down to the chickens. He had all white chickens, too. And when a chicken would hatch off some black chickens, he'd say, 'Take those chickens out and find a nigger and give 'em to him. Get rid of 'em. I won't have no nigger chickens on this plantation!'"

"I've seed all that, too," said Leroy. "And you know the time a Negro and a white man was standin' by a railroad crossin'? They was talkin', you know. The white man was tellin' the Negro what he wanted him to do. So along come another Negro drivin' a wagon with a white mule hitched to it. Well, the railin' was kinda high at this crossin' and the wheels got caught and the wagon stopped. This Negro who was drivin' begin to holler at that mule. 'Get up!' he says. 'Get along there.'"

"So the white man holler up there and asked him, say, 'Hey you, don't you know that's a white mule you talkin' to?'"

"Yassuh, boss," the Negro tell him. 'Get up, Mister mule!'"

Natchez and Leroy began to guffaw,

COMMON GROUND

and, after a moment, when he got the point of the joke, Sib's laughter burst over him in torrents. Again he went staggering down the path, howling with glee and beating his arms helplessly in the air. So we all laughed together in the early morning breeze, blowing the blues out of our lungs and hearts in gusts of wild laughter.

"And how about that Prince Albert tobacco?" gasped Natchez, when he could speak again.

"I've heard of that," said Leroy.

"You know you couldn't go into one of these here little country stores and say, 'Gimme a can of Prince Albert'? Not with that white man on the can."

"What would you say?"

"Gimme a can of Mister Prince Albert!"

We were caught up in the gales of squalling laughter that racked Sib, until we must have looked like a party of madmen capering there in the dawn under the lee of the levee. We were howling down the absurdity, the perversity, and the madness that grips the land on which we stood, a beautiful and fecund land, rich in food and genius and good living and song, yet turned into a sort of purgatory by fear.

Now for an instant we understood each other. Now in this moment of laughter, the thongs and the chains, the harsh customs of dominance, the stupefying and brutalizing lies of race had lost their fallacious dignity, but only for an instant. The magic night had gone. Back in Memphis our night's friendship and understanding

would vanish like this morning's mist under the pitiless southern sun. The blues would begin again their eternal rhythm, their eternal ironic comment:

*The blues jumped a rabbit, run him a solid mile,
When the blues overtaken him, he hol-
lered like a baby child. . . .*

"Yeah," said Natchez, his face showing somberly now in the hard light of the July morning, "that's the way things go down around these little southern places—enough to give anybody the blues."

Alan Lomax, with his father, John A. Lomax, is the author of *Folk Song: U.S.A.*, recently published by Duell, Sloan and Pearce (music arrangements by the See-gars). Mr. Lomax is director of folk music for Decca Records and does a program for Mutual called "Your Ballad Man."

The material for "I Got the Blues" and for the book of which this article will be a part, grew out of Mr. Lomax' years of collecting folk music for the Library of Congress, when he documented the oral music of the United States with 8,000 field records from Texas to Michigan. He recorded also the biographies of the folk singers, and his new book, tentatively called *Salt of the Earth*, will draw on these recordings to present a portrait of the South as seen and experienced by Negro folk artists.

The scratchboard drawing is by Oliver Harrington.

NEW CITIZENS

THE THINGS OF LIFE

BEATRICE GRIFFITH

ALL THE KIDS was home from the fruits and jails. It was October, before the war. Little 8-Ball, Blackie, Duke, Thousand Dollars, Bennie, Dutchboy and Tito—nearly all the guys was here, inside and outside of old Beto's. Her place is small, but big enough for us Calleros guys and the juke box. I just come in from my afternoon paper route, and until tonight hadn't seen Tito since he came home from Fresno. Chuey and me was drinking pop and we could see him outside in his car before he come in. *Jijole*, it was good to see that big smile and his little mustache. Tito is short and dark skin like me, but he is rugged, man, and wears the best drapes in Los Calleros. He is a boxer that fights from his heart. In his fight pants he sews the American flag and the Mexican flag to win—and he wins! He's on the way for amateur state champion. The big fight this month at the Hollywood Legion will tell. And when Tito gambles he wins, too. Last week in a crap game he walked away with a gun! Tito will give you anything. If he sees his friend in the gutter with no sweater, he will take his sweater and give it him. Tito is my friend ever since we steal penny candy together. Always when he has not beans he eats at my house. He's swell. And every place for guys that's been in trouble knows his name.

"*Hórale, vato, hórale!*" The guys from the car come bustin' in the door. "*Ése, hórale, ése, guy!*" Everybody was laughing and talking together. And the music,

man, it was sweet jive. Little 8-Ball was handin' me another dime to stick in the box when Tito came over and gives me the old smile. "*Hórale, Mingo. Onde esta tu wisa?*"

I give him a laugh. "*Rosie? Me cae peseta!* She's going with Teno 'cause he's more rugged, she says. *Que sura*, all you get from girls is trouble, sometimes good trouble, but trouble."

But with Tito it's girls. After his Italian girl, who thought she was as white as the Virgin, quitted him and married the paddy, he stole his first car. Since then he just got lots girls now. Every week a new wisa. He gives them a present or a kiss—all girls, lots girls. They run after him, and he let them. So when I tell him, "*Rosie, me cae peseta,*" he laughs and takes a long drink. Then he gives me the wink. "*Wisas, wisas, mi carnal, son cosas de la vida*—things of life—the good things of life! Ain't that right, Stiff Neck?" He took a cuff at him sitting on the floor, beating out the music, talking to himself.

Before Stiff Neck can answer him, I ask Tito real quiet, "Tito, got that gun you won last night?"

Tito give me the big eye, then all right. "How come, Mingo? You never liked guns. Sure, I got it, but I'm going to sell it, before old Jones finds it on me and sends me up on a adw. One more time with those cops and I go to San Quentin for sure. I'm 18 now, man." Then he pulled it from his back pocket. It was

COMMON GROUND

black and real smooth—real little in his hand. He turned it over and then gave it to me. "Have a look. It's a beauty."

But I give it him back real quick. "It's a good gun—okay, Tito—but I don't like it. Guns give more trouble than girls, lot more trouble."

Tito gives me a big smile. "How about trouble, Stiff Neck? This quiet guy, this Mingo, thinks guns are trouble—and girls are trouble—and his drunk old man's trouble. How's your trouble?"

Stiff Neck, who got that way 'cause a cop busted his neck, give Tito a long look from his dark glasses. "Tito, I never got trouble. A few drags of tea and I'm happy. It don't matter if I haven't got the sax, or no job, or no girl. Nothing matters but being happy. It's like in the movies—everything's a happy ending and the rich don't always win."

But I remember when Stiff Neck was the best player in our school band. That was before he got caught riding in a stolen car, and lost his job and saxophone at the same time. He used to beat his brother when he found him smoking tea in the alley. Stiff Neck was a clean guy who said he didn't want nothing of it, like me. But now, since he's got a court record, he's a real tea hound, and drying up his brains.

Rooster brought us a drink, and for another nickel we got "Pine Top's Boogie Woogie" outta that box. Stiff Neck took a drink. "You know, Tito, I sit at my old man's but can't write the music. Well, I take a few drags of tea and, man, I write music I can't even hear. I hear music I can't write. Gee, there's music in your hair and on the walls, in your clothes, and on the floor, in the chair, and behind the lights. In all the room the notes come so fast I can't write them down. Such sweet music I get. All the drums, and the sax, and the tuba—all are sitting around the room playing for you each its piece—so

hot, so slow. Each plays its own music and beats—cutting the jive real swell."

Tito nodded his head. "Sure man. That's it. *Cosas de la vida*—music or girls, it's the same."

Just then Turko came in all excited. "Boogie's been knifed! Some Roberts guys jumped him down by Olivera Street."

"Let's get 'em. They're having a party tonight at General's," Tito yelled. He was out the door with all of us running after and piling into cars. Tito turned the corner on two wheels, and Dutchboy's roadster did the same. We dashed up the hill and around the school down the street that led to our houses. Some guys jumped out to get bottles and rocks. Everybody worked fast. We got more fellows and then we cut out for Roberts' territory.

Now with gangs, trouble starts from most anything. Maybe some guys in a district don't like your looks, so they beat a guy up and stuff. So you get together for revenge. When they see us alone they'll jump us, and when we see them alone we do the same thing. It's that way. But if it's a smart raid in another district and you're bustin' in on a party, you park quite a ways away so you can surprise them all of a sudden. It's a case of looking for adventure and some fun. There's nothing to do on the streets, no place to go, so you get together and then go out and find adventure. But tonight it was more than adventure. We'd taken a lot from the Roberts guys. They were getting too smart, sure.

We crossed the tracks into their territory. Parked our cars by the gas tanks on Puccini Avenue and got out. When there are a lot of beefs, each district knows you're coming before you get there, like a telegraph. But this time we were lucky. General's house, where the party was going on, was hidden by the big soap factory on the corner. Like all Mexicans,

THE THINGS OF LIFE

he got too much family and lived in a little shack with a lot of kids. But tonight was no kids outside.

We walked real quiet toward the music coming from behind the palm trees in his yard. We walked in the front door, just looking around. Some guys stayed outside on the porch, and more beside the little fence and on the sidewalk—waiting, so's Roberts wouldn't know how many we had. Tito walked up to the cutest chick in the house and started cutting a rug with her. I walked over with Blackie and Thousand Dollars, and he asked, "How about some beer, General?"

There weren't many guys come yet, so General and the other Roberts cats didn't do nothing. He gave us a big look and said, "Sure, you guys. Just get in line. We'll give you some beer."

Some our fellows was acting big, dancing and sitting down, walking in the rooms and hanging around outside. Rooster was cleaning his nails with a knife; others was just standin' around, just lookin', and that's dangerous. There was a lot of beer and food in the kitchen. Tito called, "Come on, you guys!" and we started helping ourselves. This was to be strictly a hit-and-run attack. Suddenly, our guys started clipping left and right, and the fight was on. The trouble of having girls around is that they get hold of you and tell you to break it up. Josie got me around the waist and hung on tight. Another guy was pounding me and making it tough. Rooster clipped Josie and she dropped. But the chick Prieta hung onto Tito tight, while he had it hard with another guy. Women are all alike; these Roberts chicks just wanted to say later they saw it all. Say they saw blood, so they can pat their guys on the back if they win and are rugged. Then they'll walk in Flats, Dog Town, Mateo—anybody's territory.

Things went fast and rugged. We

busted up the party and then cut and got into our cars to parade around that territory. We were all jammed together in those cars, man. Looked like bunches of black grapes, there were so many boys all bunching and popping out of the cars. We drove fast through those streets, and yelled who was the toughest guys—Roberts or Los Calleros?

Roberts got reorganized about that time and took after us. They chased us all over Hell, but we had the fastest cars so we led them right out Whittier Boulevard, to the top of the hill and Calvary Cemetery. They put on a burst of speed and caught up and threw some shots, but didn't get anybody. That was a race. I hung onto that car like the roller coasters going at Venice. It was excitement, que suavé. First time I was ever in on busting up a party. I'd always been neutral on these beefs.

The moon was up by the time we got to the cemetery, and everybody broke and ran to get shelter behind the old tombstones. Rocks and bottles was flying. I was close by Tito, who threw a punch at one guy, and I followed and threw another at a fellow clipping me. Rooster got his eye cut from a quick jab and couldn't see from the blood coming down. Joker, from Roberts, knifed Stiff Neck, and the blood was spouting from his back like a faucet—on and off—between my fingers. On and off—I couldn't stop it, man. Tito pulled his gun and shot Joker in the shoulder, and then somebody threw a lot more bullets, 'cause some pieces of stone from the big old angel over us came falling down on Stiff Neck and me. Everything was all mixed up in that cemetery. Guys fighting and running across the graves in the night, yelling and shooting and fighting. Everybody was shot at or knifed or something. I was afraid for Tito—and Stiff Neck—and myself, a little.

COMMON GROUND

Pretty soon there was police cars with sirens and searchlights cutting across the cemetery. We scattered and piled into cars to get out of there. Tito dropped his gun on the ground when he reached back to give us a hand with Stiff Neck, and we pulled him in the car. I reached down quick, grabbed the gun, and stuck it in my belt. Tito jammed the gears into high, and we shot out of there. Before we got to the end of the block, a police searchlight swung straight across the bunch of us, and full on me hanging on the side of the car. We stopped on a dime.

It was moonlight, real bright, coming through the bars of the tall window, through the bars of juvenile tank 13-E-1, the Mexican tank, in the jail where us guys was. I could see Lockheed, Diamond Walnuts, big old National Biscuit, the black gas tanks, and the place where was my home. Down there was my old lady going to church; there was my kid brother hanging around with the midget gang on the corner by the poolhall; and there was my old man, drunk—drunk with cement in his lungs. There was cute little Rosie, too. Gee, you'd think her lips was made outta Lovenest bars, the guys love to kiss 'em so. And then there was my job. Down there was my life—only here was my life. Here in the cells of the jail where the guys was singing, making songs, corridos, to keep them company, or fighting the fellows in the next tank with words.

That was a long time ago. Ten nights ago, that night when I led the way to that little old room 45 in City Hall. I hear the guys talk about that room, but this was the first time I seen it. First time I been handcuffed to a chair and slapped—and by a Mexican cop. The cops ain't dumb. Not too dumb to know that if they beat you long enough they can get

information, or else they pin it on a guy with a bad record they don't like. They had the bunch of us, except Stiff Neck and Rooster who were at Georgia Street Hospital. The cops took Tito's boxing license from his pocket, read it out loud, and laughed at him. "Tough guy, huh? Okay, let's see you. Come on, show us how tough you are," and they started challenging him. Blackie had some letters from his girl up in the fruits, and they read these aloud to each other making cracks about the love part.

Then they got down to the business. Tryin' to figure out how this beef started and what everybody done. Those dizzy cops, lots they know about gang beefs. It didn't do them no good. Nobody talked. Mexicans don't talk in jail or in court. We settle our own beefs. It's not for a Mexican to stool on any guy, no matter if the guy knife you clean or dirty like a rat.

There are so many people in trouble. I never seen so many people in trouble before as here, even when they are hungry with no beans. This trouble in jail is like a big department store—hundreds working to make some people unhappy: the cops, the boy trusties who beat you up if you are from another gang, the trusty who promised to get Turko's gold tooth before he got out, the bailiff in court who walks you in a chain to the bullpen, the judge who doesn't know what's a Pachuco, the Bull Durham, 75 cents, the bad food, the beatings, the sad songs, the fight talk, the guys hating each other, the stink, the iron bars. Always trouble. This jail is trouble, for guys in trouble.

I'm remembering old José, who lived at our house some, when the cops caught him drunk. They pushed him around, had a little fun. Then they ask him what he do for a living, him that is always poor for the living of his life. He look them in the face and shake his head. Then he tell

THE THINGS OF LIFE

them, "I got no work. For me it is to just walk around, pick up bottles, and let life happen."

And I remember when my cousin got caught for stealing a car. I was real little then, when two cops came to our house. One was nice and blondie, but the other was rough and talked tough to my cousin. To him my mother said, "Please to be seated in the 'lectricity chair." Is it that the law don't like all Mexicans, or don't like nobody who is poor?

And I remember that at Preston, when you run away, they put you with no clothes in a little closet and shoot gas at you in a little hole at the top—that's what the fellows say. And there you are lonely with no friends, and in some cottages you can't talk. And, for that gun, maybe they will send me to Preston. Teno's been to Forestry camp, and that's good, man. You earn money for working and get to be leader—Teno was camp mayor. You wear special handkerchiefs and have swell guys for bosses. You get good food and come to shows if your record's good. But guns are trouble. And my school record's not good, 'cause I'm sleepy in class always.

Yesterday when my mother came to see me it was like seeing the animals in the zoo with the noise. Only animals are not so noisy. Today she came up the elevator with her pass, and before she got from the elevator door she hears the roaring, the noise like the waves in the ocean—loud, loud. There was lots women there—waiting to talk to their men behind the green bars and dirty wire screen.

Then I got called and come down into the room of men who are talking and yelling to the women outside the bars down the long room. After hunting, I found my mother and talked to her. Gee, it was good to see her. You get lonely up there in jail. I put my ear to the screen to hear her words, and the women and girls outside are like in a heavy dream, so

dark dark they are. Rosie come to see her, she tells me, and my probation officer is coming to see me. My old man beats her some more, and there is nothing for food in the house. These things she shouts to me with tears in her eyes. Pretty soon the cop comes by and looks at her pass. Then the time was gone, and she goes away crying her eyes into her black purse.

Before she leaves this room of noise and sadness, she gives a clean shirt and dollar to the policeman in front. He opens up the little iron door and pushes to me my clean shirt for the trial. Then he bangs it and says to everybody, "That's all." And more women wait in line until he opens it again for men to get razors and money and clean shirts.

Teno called me from the window. "Mingo, you know that bunch of old ladies and men who come up here and preach us about Christ today? Well, there was a new one today. Never seen her before. She looks at us guys and she was God-scared, man! Her eyes was going like chicken lids when they're sick. See her?"

I tell him no—all I do is listen how we're going to suffer for our sins. When they asked us what we planned to do when we got out, Blackie looked them straight and say, "Go straight for awhile, and then take the wrong road, like my old man. What you think?"

This day mostly the kids listened, but some laughed and told them to go away or talk about something else. How was it with the chicks from the East Side, and the cats from the Avenues? And who was playin' at the Orpheum? Stuff like that, and they'd sing for us some more and then go away.

Well, this morning we come into court. All fifteen of us come down the elevator chained and handcuffed together, some still bandaged. When we got to the bull-

COMMON GROUND

pen to wait for the Judge to call us into the other room, they took our chains off and we got a chance to put up some more names on the walls. Some guys, Rooster and Turko and Gato, got their names there four times already. But some of us write them there for the first time. There's more Pachuco names on that bullpen wall than on the street cars, billboards, walls, fences, and doors in Los Angeles, I think.

Pretty soon the policeman comes and opens the door. "Come on, you guys," he tells us. And we go into the big courtroom to wait on the long bench until the Judge calls us in his little private room for juveniles. Beyond the little wooden fence the room was full of people, and some kids from the gang who didn't go on the beef was there, too. Rosie and her sister was there, cute with flowers in her hair and big red lips for smiling. *Jijole!* She give me a wink. She talked quiet with her lips when the policeman wasn't looking, but I don't know what she says, and she made some hand signs. I looked a long long look at Rosie, 'cause if they send me to Preston I won't see her for more than a year. The guys made signs, too, and gave me smiles. Man, that was good. I look down the crease in my drapes to my shoes and the big soles. *Simón*, these new calcos were good and heavy, thickest soles in Los Calleros. With the gang I was getting rugged.

In the front row was my crying mother and the old man and kid brother. My mother looks so clean and poor in this big room. Gato, my brother, was making ink tattoo crosses on his hand—slow and big. Some guys had nobody there, and for them that was hard. Nobody cares, and the Judge maybe don't care for them too, then. And I see my boss, the paper boss who is my friend. He looks at me but don't smile, and I know what he is thinking. 'Cause he always tells me to stay out

of trouble, and always he can depend on me, he says. Always I carry that paper for him, even if I'm tired and sleepy from that morning route. Back of these are more parents and kids, and people who come just to look. A couple cops with pistols stand straight along the sides of the walls.

Then we go into the little courtroom to sit for the trial. The Judge with no hair asked the guys a lot of questions and then he comes to me. The cop called in my old man and mother and brother. When they come in they swear to God, and then he asks a lot of questions about me and the gun. The Judge is a pretty good guy, but he just don't know how is life with Pachucos. How it is to be poor all your life and brown skins. That's what he don't know. He asks where did I get the gun, and I told him I picked it up off the ground at the cemetery. Then he tells me I'm not telling the truth.

"Whose was the gun if you picked it up at the cemetery?" he asks me.

So I tell him, "I don't know. I don't know."

He says to me, "Who threw the gun on the ground?"

But only I can tell him, "I don't know the guy who threw the gun."

He is getting mad 'cause nobody knows anything. None of the guys knows about that fight, or who hurt anybody. So he tells me one more time where did that gun come from, and I only tell him, "I don't know whose gun. I don't know."

Then he leans over and looks hard at me. "Do you know any reason why you should not be committed to Preston Reformatory?"

My heart went down down. But I only tell him, "I don't know."

He asks my old man and mother about the gun, and the interpreter tells them what he says. But they don't know nothing about the gun they tell him. My mother began with the big tears that

THE THINGS OF LIFE

dropped into her lap. When the Judge asks my father why he didn't go to the clinic for his lungs, he got so nervous he dropped his hat and pulled at his shirt and talked like he stuttered. The Judge asked him about beating my mother and getting drunk all the time, but you can't tell a Mexican anything. He'll do it some more.

The probation officer then tells his story, what he knows. He tells him I work for supporting the family and I got a clean record. Then the Judge asks me why I'm absent from school so much, and I tell him about the two paper routes—up early at three in the morning and to work when it is dark. Then come home at eight for some food if there is any, some beans or milk—and go sleepy to school. Then it's some more work in the afternoon and come home about seven and then to see the gang. That's what I tell him.

My boss says I work hard always. This and more he tell the Judge. My boss is a good man; he sticks for his friend.

But the Judge gets mad. The mad was coming down all over him when he tell my mother and old man can't they keep me from going with the guys in the gang? And no matter where the Youth Authority says I gotta go, Preston or Forestry camp, when I come back I can't see no gang kids, he says. A lot that Judge knows. Who you got but your gang?

The interpreter tells them that about the gang, and my mother nods her head and cries her tears. And my old man, he nods his head, too. Gato only looks at the Judge and says nothing. But there is more in my heart than trouble. There is hate—hate for the cop who lied when the Judge asked him what happened—and hate for the Judge who says the gang is bad. Only this I know: Tito is my friend and won't go to San Quentin. Bennie, Dutchboy, Rooster, Memo, Turko, Blackie, Stiff Neck—these are my friends, them and Rosie.

The Judge looks at the papers on his desk that are about me. Then he looks at me and my family and tells me I am to get committed to the California Youth Authority. They will decide where I go, to Preston or Forestry camp. More days of waiting in jail—no job—no money at home, and a court record. That's what the Judge's words say.

The other guys get free on probation, 'cause nobody says nothing about nobody—and the Roberts cats don't talk either. Stiff Neck's still in the jail hospital, but getting well maybe.

Then it is over, and us guys go back into the bullpen and get chained up again to go upstairs.

Upstairs the guys that was going to be released on probation got their names called by the jailer. All our guys but me got called out. When they got called there was a howl went up from those staying. Some guys got beat up before they got out of their cells, and in the cell next me Turko got a punch in the mouth that knocked his gold tooth out, but he kept it okay. Spit it into his hand, cursed the guy, and stuck it in his pocket and ran.

The days went slow.

Down on the street from the marble hallway of this building, I knew was my mother and grandmother. Walking slowly down Temple to Main, past the Mexican grocery stores, past the shoe shops and tortillerias. They were going begging money, pennies, and dimes for candles like they promised for St. Anthony. For it is St. Anthony who helps Mexican women whose kids are in jail. Stopping Mexican women and girls, they would go begging their way up the street, up Main Street, until they got to the church. Then to buy candles, and go on their knees up to the altar, each the one praying St. Anthony.

From my pocket I took the letter that Rosie gave my mother and asked her to

COMMON GROUND

slip to me. I sat on my bunk and read it a long time.

Dear Mingo:

October 24, 1941

No matter what happens you're my *jaino*, and I'm your *wisa*. I'll wait for you as long as there is Mexicans to show the paddys how to be brave. I'm going to work in the *chileria* factory even if I do get fat white hands from the water. I sure can get a job there. Then I can get a black finger-tip coat, and when you come home we can go to the Orpheum when the Duke comes with his band—and everybody's jiving in his seat—so keen, so swell. Rhythm for reals.

Tito got out of jail yesterday. They couldn't prove nothing. So it's good he can fight at the Hollywood stadium tomorrow—to win! He wrote your name in his fight trunks between the Mexican and American flags! *Que suavé!*

Last night I had a dream. It was snowing in the forest and all the trees were playing boogie-woogie and jive. Different trees played different music. Well, one

tree leaned low for me and there was you beside me. And you know, Mingo? Remember that teacher who was good for Mexicans at Lafayette? Well, she was there too, smiling at me in the forest of snow. She said, "Rosie, I will give you and Mingo a present. I will give you blond curls." ('Cause she was a girl now.) So she, the little blond girl, cut off her yellow curls and give them you and me, and we cut our black hair and give it her. And all the trees were singing boogie real soft and we were happy for hurting in that dream.

Do you suppose this means something good?

Hay te watcho, Mingo. I love you. You're a rugged *gato*.

X O X O X O

Your Rosie

This is another in the series of stories about young Mexican Americans by Beatrice Griffith which have been appearing in COMMON GROUND. They will be part of her Houghton Mifflin Fellowship book, American Me, to be published in the Fall.

RICE INSTEAD OF POTATO

FERD OKADA

THE GAS ATTENDANT was wiping the windshield of my car.

"About a hundred and fifty miles to Salt Lake City, isn't it?" I asked him.

"Just about," he said. "It's a hundred and forty-seven."

The lighted clock on the wall of the gas station pointed to five minutes after eight. I figured I would be out of the Nevada desert and in Salt Lake by midnight.

"How are the eating joints in this town?" I asked him.

He paused in his wiping. "Well," he said thoughtfully, "there's the Silver Dollar and Ma's Cookery and the Chink's." He didn't look at me, but he added quickly, "The Chinese place."

"Good food?"

"Yeah," he said. "Mostly American, though. But Joe Wong has chop suey and chow mein."

RICE INSTEAD OF POTATO

"Thanks."

I paid for the gas and oil and drove down the street. It was about three blocks long and the town was built around it. On my left was a row of weather-beaten shacks culminating in a small railroad depot with wooden platforms. On my right was an assortment of buildings—a general store, several bars, feed stores, a couple of poolrooms—all built of unpainted boards. I went by the Silver Dollar, with its small red neon-tubing advertising Blatz Beer, and came to the Chinese

place. This had *CHOP SUEY* in white letters on its window. Below the sign somebody had written amateurishly in Chinese characters: *New China*. I couldn't miss the place. I couldn't have missed any place in that town.

I went in and sat at the counter. There was a framed picture of a Chinese pagoda on one wall and a fly-specked curling poster on another. It showed a mother and child with a blue-clad Chinese soldier standing by them. *Help China*, it said across the bottom. The booths were un-



COMMON GROUND

occupied, but a couple of men wearing faded khaki shirts and blue jeans were playing the pinball machine in one corner. Another was sitting at the counter reading a paper. There was a cup of coffee in front of him.

A stout Chinese was sitting behind the counter by the cash register. He wore a blue striped shirt, but his dark brown trousers were almost hidden by a white apron. He laid down his cigarette in a saucer and came over, mechanically wiping the counter in front of me. His lips lengthened in an automatic smile, but his eyes were blank.

I studied the menu.

"No shu mai?" I asked. "No dow foo?"

He looked at me then, and his eyes seemed to come to a focus. "Only chop suey," he said.

"Okay. Give me a couple of lamb chops."

He said something to me.

"I'm sorry," I said. "I don't speak Chinese."

He said to me, "You Chinese?"

"No," I said. "I'm Japanese. Japanese American. Born in this country," I added.

He disregarded that. "Oh, Japanese."

He stood there wiping the counter for a second more, then started to go away. He stopped before he reached the kitchen door.

"You want rice instead of potato?" he asked.

"Swell," I said. "Sure."

"Okay."

He went out into the kitchen where I heard him speaking in Chinese. A second Chinese—apparently the cook—poked his head out of the door and stared unblinkingly at me for a long moment, then withdrew his head.

I went over to the juke box but the only familiar number was Bing Crosby singing *Don't Fence Me In*. I picked a record at random and put in my nickel. A nasal

male voice, accompanied by guitar, began to sing about the joys of life in the hills of old Oklahoma where he used to ride on his cow pony. The man reading the paper began to whistle the tune.

As I sat down again, one of the men playing the pinball machine came over to the counter. He rapped a coin on the wood.

"Hey, Joe!" he shouted. "How about two-bits' worth of nickels?"

Joe came out of the kitchen and put a plate of lamb chops in front of me. There were two big scoops of rice on it. He gave me a knife and fork.

"No chopstick," he said. "Nobody use chopstick here."

The man rapped his coin again.

"Goddam it," he said, "Joe, you goddam yellow peril, give me some nickels."

The Chinese smilingly rang up a No Sale and counted out the change.

"I ain't taking none of your wooden nickels," said the man grinning. He pretended to inspect each coin carefully, and addressed the man reading the paper. "I ain't taking none of Joe's wooden nickels." He grinned happily. Joe kept smiling.

"Yeah," said the man with the paper. "You gotta be careful with them. Clever people."

"Hey, Joe!" It was the second pinball player speaking from the corner. "Hey, Joe, you think that if I prayed at the joss house and burned incense, I'd beat this machine?"

"Maybe," said Joe. He chuckled loudly, but when he came back to me, his face was unsmiling. I was going to ask for a cup of coffee but he spoke first.

"You want tea now?" he asked.

"Tea?" I said. "Oh, okay."

He didn't pour hot water from the urn over a tea bag but set an empty cup by my plate. He went into the kitchen and returned with a small teapot from which he filled my cup. It was green tea. He

RICE INSTEAD OF POTATO

didn't bother to set out cream or sugar. I took a sip.

"Good," I said. "Thank you."

He didn't say anything, so I took another sip. I remembered to make a sibilant sound.

"Where you eat *dow foo*?" he asked.

"In San Francisco."

"You like *dow foo*?"

"Yes," I said. "It's very good. I like it very much." I cut into a lamb chop. "I like it in both Japanese and Chinese styles."

"Japanese eat *dow foo*?" he asked curiously.

"Yes, my mother used to put it in soup. I also like it chilled with ice."

He lit a cigarette. "This place, nobody eat *dow foo*. Only know chop suey, chow mein."

The cook, a thin spare man in white shirt and white duck trousers, came out of the kitchen and stood by the door. He said something in Chinese to Joe. Joe said to me, "You want more rice?"

"No, thank you," I said. "I'm full."

I turned to the cook. "Very good rice," I said. Joe said something in Chinese to the cook, and he smiled and nodded at me before slipping back into the kitchen. I lit a cigarette myself and sipped at the tea.

"Have you been here a long time?" I asked.

"In Nevada," he said, "seven year. Before, I have restaurant in Utah, Idaho, Montana."

"That's a long time."

"Sometime I go Salt Lake. Sometime San Francisco."

"Yes," I said.

The man with the newspaper asked for another cup of coffee. While Joe was drawing it from the urn, I looked at my watch. I finished my tea and got up.

"How much do I owe you?" I asked.

Joe took the coffee over and came back.

"No pay," he said. "On the house."

"Thank you," I said. I paused for a moment. The man had put down his newspaper and was looking at me as he stirred his coffee. I gave Joe a slight bow.

"Good-bye," I said.

He nodded his head slowly. "Good-bye. You come again."

Born in Japan, Ferd Okada came to the United States in 1935, attending Pomona College and Claremont Graduate School, from which he has his M.A. in English Literature. During the war he taught Japanese in the Civil Affairs Training School and the Army Specialized Training Program at Yale. He is now working on his Ph.D. in anthropology at Columbia.

Miné Okubo is the illustrator.

THE SPARTAN GREEKS OF BRIDGETOWN: THE SECOND GENERATION

J. MAYONE STYCOS

(This is the last in a series of three articles on the Greek Americans of a northeastern city by J. Mayone Stycos. Graduated from Princeton last June, Mr. Stycos has been working since then with the Princeton population research group in Puerto Rico and the United States. The two earlier pieces on the Greek Americans appeared in our Winter and Spring 1948 issues.)

IN UNDERSTANDING the psychology of the second-generation Greek Americans, the role of habit in life must be considered. Habits are in general fixed patterns of acting, thinking, and feeling. They are ways of behaving that have become stereotyped in us and consequently require little conscious thought, their chief advantage consisting in an immense saving of time and effort for the organism. Thus we do not have to think about walking upstairs or brushing our teeth, and if scientists advocated different ways of performing these actions, there would be great resistance to the proposed change because change requires thought and effort, and is accordingly undesirable. Concerning habitual attitudes, few have to think about how they feel toward Jews, Negroes, Communists, etc. These attitudes, right or wrong, have become habits, and all who have attempted to change another's attitude know how unwelcome and how difficult a change of mental habit is to the average person. Because they save us trouble and time, because the grooves worn into the brain become smooth and

comfortable highways to our thoughts and activities, our habits come to be preferred and enjoyed not necessarily because they are right (although this is usually the rationale), but simply because we are accustomed to them, because it is the line of least resistance.

When two alternative courses of thought or action are presented to the individual and they are not greatly unequal in other respects, he will generally choose the course to which he has habituated himself. However, there are times when the individual sees either that the habitual course is occasioning undesirable results, or that some other alternative promises much more. In that event, a new course of action may be chosen in spite of the disturbance and difficulty in abandoning the habitual response. Thus, with many children of the foreign-born, when conflict occurs between the habitual ways of acting and thinking (those learned in childhood and consequently "foreign" habits) and new ways of thought and behavior (those of the American community), the individual will often abandon the habits of his childhood and his parents in an effort to be identified with the majority group he believes will bring him more social prestige and economic opportunity. This switch to the value-attitude system of another group, however, is not accomplished without cost; and the transition from the habituated "foreign" attitudes to those of the American group, even if ever fully accomplished, causes conflict in many spheres,

as between himself and his parents, friends, church, etc., and even within his own mind. Rebellious reactions toward their parents are quite common in the second generation of immigrant peoples. Paul Cressey in *The Taxi Dance Hall* quotes a second-generation Polish American girl who vehemently rejects the culture of the first generation: "I don't live with the Polish people. To hell with them, that's what I say. I ain't lived with them for over twelve years. The trouble with them is that they're too nose. They don't mind their own business like the other nationalities do. The Polish figure everything that's my affair is theirs. It's nobody's business what I do. . . . No! I don't want to go to no Polish dances. There's too many old people there. You can't have a good time."

Such rebellious attitudes, however, are pretty much absent among the second generation in Bridgetown. (The Bridgetown of my survey is a modern city of 40,000 inhabitants, situated on the banks of a northeastern river. Bridgetown is not its real name. For more information about the town, see my first discussion of the Bridgetown Greeks in the Winter 1948 issue of this magazine.) In Bridgetown a peculiar social balance seems to exist between the two cultures, so that the children appear at a fairly stable equilibrium between the cultural poles, liking elements of both, disliking other elements of both, but having only a few areas where the cultures clash sufficiently to cause psychological maladjustment. This seems due to several causes. Unlike most ethnic groups who educate their children in the homeland culture by haphazard means in the family, the Bridgetown Greeks have a systematic program for educating them in the Greek language and traditions. Also, by a tightly knit, well organized community the Greeks offer their children a second home, or a kind of bridge between

the family and society—a situation not ordinarily offered the American child.

How complete this identification can be is illustrated by remarks of several young Greek Americans who have been so Greek-acculturated as to prefer the "Greek way" to American culture. All have had at least a high school education. "I like the Greek customs, the religion, and the Greek way of doing things," one of them told me. "We speak the language home all the time. I wish I could express myself to you in Greek. I plan to bring up my children the Greek way in everything but the matter of excessive strictness. I prefer Greek dances to American. They are more informal, like ones you might hold in your own home. I know the older folks sit around and make remarks but I don't mind it. I prefer to date Greek boys, and I definitely want to marry one. Yes, I do think Americans have more respect for a girl, though. A Greek fellow figures he's your own kind and can get away with everything." The speaker was an unmarried girl in her middle or late twenties, who had spent two years in Greece several years back. A member of the Greek "upper class" in Bridgetown, she demonstrated a positive attitude to most of the Greek culture.

Another girl of the same age group, attractive, well dressed, and with all the ostensible signs of American culture, confessed: "When I'm with Americans I am constantly on my guard. I have to have my best foot forward all the time. I can't seem to feel completely at ease, at home. I don't know why it is; I've gone out of my way, almost knocked myself out trying to feel at home with them, but I just can't seem to do it. With the Greeks I feel much warmer, always feel at home."

Strong Greek preference was not so often found in the boys, because of their relative freedom and greater range of contact with American culture. But several

"upper-class" boys showed unusual inclinations toward the Greek way of life.

Peter Xenides was one to whom I talked. He is a short dark boy of 23, of quiet manners and speech. Working for an M.A. in philology, he displayed an unusual amount of Greek acculturation for one reared in the United States. He thought this due to his mother's never having learned English, and his constant association with Greek culture. Toward American customs, foods, and friends, he displayed a rather passive attitude: they were "all right," "nothing objectionable" about them, and he could do things the American way without discomfort. Toward the Greek way of life, however, he manifested a positive attitude. He preferred and actively enjoyed the activities stemming from the Greek culture. He insisted this was not because he considered the Greek way superior to the American, but merely because it was the way to which he had become habituated. In terms of food, he did not, as his mother, think Greek food any tastier than American; he preferred it merely on a basis of habit. He adopted the Greek way of life because for him it was the line of least resistance. In concrete terms, if he were in the city for one evening and he had to choose between the World's Fair and a Greek banquet, he would choose the latter, even though he would very much enjoy the former. His remarks are particularly significant, I think. Greek habits of thinking and acting are so firmly imbedded in him that, despite his high school and college contacts, he remains essentially a Greek.

Gus Scouras was a high school student when I talked with him. He was about 18, and an accomplished violinist. In school he headed the Assembly Committee, was in the National Honor Society and National Forensic League, and in addition to his musical activities was active in dra-

matics. He is a smiling, ebullient type of boy, speaking volubly of the things which interested him. He came to the interview with a large pin on his jacket lapel, a colored miniature of the Greek Evzone.

"I came to this country when I was about five," he told me, "and my parents have always been very strict with me, even more so than most of the Greeks around here, but I haven't minded it so far. If my father ever saw me smoking, he'd cut my head off, and that's putting it mildly. That goes for the other Greek kids, too, I guess.

"I have my own jurisdiction now. My folks feel I'm old enough to decide things for myself. Of course I know what they want and expect me to do, and I act accordingly. I know who my parents want me to go out with and when. I've had it drummed into me. I just can't go out any old time with either fellows or girls. My folks don't like me out at night. Last month a girl invited me to her birthday party and I told her I'd let her know. I asked my mother about it and she asked me stuff like did I think I should, and what would we do, so I decided I wouldn't go. Those things are a waste of time anyway.

"They don't like me to date girls so I don't. They feel I should wait until I'm ready to get married and then I can take the one I want out. Of course they'd have to give her the O.K. No, I don't mind it. A couple of times in the past I thought I kind of liked a girl at school, and thought I'd like to take her to a movie or something. I'd never ask her and pretty soon the romance dies away and you see it wasn't worth while anyway.

"I saw what was written in a Slam Book about me. There were a lot of nice compliments from the girls, but underneath there were a lot of things like, 'What good does all this do you, Gus?' and 'Why don't you give us girls a chance,

THE SPARTAN GREEKS OF BRIDGETOWN: THE SECOND GENERATION

Gus? American girls are brought up differently. They don't care about you; they just want a date. Once I had to ask a girl to a party the school orchestra was having. She didn't know me hardly at all and yet she accepted me like that! The next night she was out with another guy. Greek girls aren't like that. They want to know more about you. I enjoy Greek girls more than Americans any place. You know they have good reputations and they're not forward like American girls. I like their looks better, too. I don't like American features like blondes and red-heads."

Bill Rousolis was more mature than Gus, active in dramatics, oratory, and the year book, and planned to attend law school upon graduation from high. He said, "I've been brought up Greek, and I feel more at home with them. I have never been to American parties. In school my popularity is not as great as it might be because I am not known. I don't hang around with an American crowd after school the way most fellows do. I feel self-conscious sometimes about being a Greek. Sometimes I detect some malice in their jests about my nationality. I used to be quite self-conscious about it; now I try to ignore it and don't particularly care.

"At the Rialto Hotel dance this year they tried something new. They allowed coupling, and did not permit the parents to be present. I didn't enjoy the dance. I didn't like what I saw there. There were younger kids there, 15 to 18 years old, and they were carried away. I mean they weren't satisfied with the dance; they wanted to go out to night clubs after. Such a thing can be dangerous. Why couldn't they be satisfied with the dance?

"I think coupling is all right, maybe once a year, but they should be at least 18. I also think the parents should be present at such mixed gatherings. Yes, I think Americans should be allowed. We should show them we're willing to be

friends with them. For myself I wouldn't date American girls. I think differently than they do. But it's O.K. if others want to. No, I don't think my upbringing has been any stricter than Americans, but my parents tell me that Americans do not think as clearly as Greeks, not logically. They misinterpret the American liberalism."

Many of the remarks of these boys might well have come from a conservative old-country Greek. While such conservative reactions are perhaps more the exception than the rule among the second generation, I must emphasize that the other second-generation young people I talked to differed in their remarks more in degree than in kind. Many expressed pride concerning their nationality: "I'm proud of being a Greek. They've brought me up that way." "All through high school they used to call me 'Greek.' I didn't mind at all. I'm proud of being a Greek." "I'm proud of being a Greek because of what the old Greeks have done and what the new ones are doing." Contrast these attitudes with that of a second-generation Italian American, appearing in juvenile court for resisting punishment by his Sicilian-born father. "Well, judge," he challenged, "honest now, do you think an American ought to let himself be licked by a *foreigner*?" (Related by Edward Lewis in *America: Nation or Confusion*?) Such complete identification with the American group comes largely as a result of the school's successful indoctrination of patriotic American attitudes. In most immigrant groups there is no organized counter-propaganda. The duty lies largely within the family, and at best they succeed only in giving the child a smattering of the mother tongue and a hazy idea of the immigrant culture, which is easily dispelled by powerful contradictory influences of the American school, the American environment, etc.

II

The first factor in the explanation of the surprising equilibrium maintained between the two cultures by the second-generation Greek Americans of Bridgetown, as well as their unusually strong tendencies toward the Greek way, is their systematic education. This is pursued in various ways. The foremost and most effective is the Greek school. For over a decade the community maintained a Greek teacher. The priest has now assumed the position. Every Greek child must attend daily or tri-weekly classes, held after American school hours. These average an hour and a half per class, and are attended by each child for several years. Some of those I interviewed had attended as long as six years. The emphasis is on Greek language and history. After mastering the rudiments of reading and writing, the pupils do readings and oral recitations, the subject matter dealing with Greek mythology and history. In addition to these classes, there is the Sunday school, where the young people are taught the prayers, liturgy, history, and doctrines of the Greek Orthodox Church.

The result of this training is twofold. The thorough acquaintance with Greek culture results in a certain fondness for it by the second generation, as often happens after familiarity with a subject. Closely allied with this, the students are provided with an effective, intellectual rationale for their "foreign" preferences. Other second-generation children, who must pick up the immigrant culture haphazardly from the home, know little of its history, consequently, or of its more material achievements, and, if they speak its language, do so only with a difficulty they find tedious. The young Greek Americans of Bridgetown, through the school and Sunday school, learn a history that can easily rival the attractiveness of the his-

tory they learn from the American school; they speak the Greek language with a facility that makes it no more onerous than what one youth called a "pleasant change." Contrast the opinions of two Bridgetown girls concerning the language and customs of Greece with those from another study. The Bridgetown girls seem to have found a satisfactory medium between the two cultures: Said one: "Most of my friends are Americans, but I feel at ease with either group. It just depends upon whom I've known longer. I like to speak Greek, and I read and write it easily. Right now I'm reading a Greek book. I like to dance Greek and to go to the Greek dances, but it depends on my mood. Sometimes I just feel like American dancing." Said the other: "Most of my friends are American, and I really have no preference; but I miss speaking Greek at college. I had it for six years at night school in Bridgetown."

Parents of two Greek families in another community, interviewed in a study by Warner and Srole, *Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups*, reveal the disorganizing effects on their children when the plan of education is unsystematic: "The trouble is they don't want to use the Greek language. If I ask my boys to read me something in Greek, they don't want to do it. If I want to write a letter in Greek to the old country, they won't hardly do it. Children don't like to use the language. If I ask them to write something in English, that is all right." And, again: "So many children hate Greece, the name of Greece, everything Greek because they have been made to learn Greek. Then when they grow up, they give it up entirely. The English language is their mother language. It comes first. We try to be an example for other families; we don't force the children to speak Greek."

Thus, while most immigrant groups

THE SPARTAN GREEKS OF BRIDGETOWN: THE SECOND GENERATION

send their children into the American cultural zone relatively unarmed, the Greek community in Bridgetown so primes its young with intellectual defenses that they can, to a considerable degree, ward off the sallies of American culture.

But intellectual defenses and familiarity with a culture are insufficient to explain the strong likings manifested by the young population. There must be emotional attachment, too. As I have said, the Bridgetown Greeks, by a tightly knit, well organized community, offer their children a second home or a kind of bridge between the family and society—a situation not ordinarily offered to the American child. The American child learns quickly that it is only within his particular family that he can act fully at ease, express himself, be appreciated and loved, have his wants requited. He finds he is not so treated in other families; he must turn to the gang, to clubs and organizations, if he is to acquire a sense of “belonging” to something outside his own family. In general, there are few intermediate groups for the child between his particular intimate family and the general totally indifferent American society. For this reason, whenever the child can find other groups or families in which he will feel a sense of belonging or of being a part, he will react favorably toward them. In Bridgetown, such a situation exists. The second-generation Greek American finds the Greek community a group much larger than his family, yet much smaller than the general community, one which affords him the same kind of intimacy and friendship experienced in his family, while at the same time offering him financial assistance and group protection superior to the corresponding aids given by the general community. Simultaneously he identifies himself with a “big family” and with a powerful, protective minority group which forms a kind of friendly buffer

state between him and the total American society.

There are, then, certain benefits to be derived from belonging to a group which is both by nature of its national customs and its primary group structure more friendly and protective toward its members than is the American community. These are well recognized by members of the second generation:

“The Americans seem to be colder. At a Greek affair if you are a stranger, everybody comes up and asks you where you are from, etc. But, for instance, when I chaperoned my sister’s sorority dance, I felt like an outsider; they didn’t make me feel at home.”

“I went to an American shower party. I knew only the hostess and the bride-to-be. Why, I was sitting in a corner all night! They made no effort. The others seemed to be content to be sitting around, too. When Greeks have a party, we want to know everybody. A Greek hostess will start group games, no matter how silly, to get the ball rolling and get everybody acquainted. There is a lot more group activity.”

“I feel more at ease in Greek homes. They make you feel more at home and even tell you to act as if it were your own home. When Greek kids go to a strange Greek house, they can roll up their sleeves and take off their jackets. You can’t do that in an American home.”

One girl expressed by an anecdote both the extent of the national cohesiveness and the benefits to be derived: “The Greeks are really big-hearted, especially toward their own. Two strange Greek girls came to town from upstate because they wanted to mix with the Greek crowd here. They happened to stop in at Mr. Bisos’ candy shop, and he sent them up to meet me. While they were talking to me, Mr. Kalos walked in and, after talking with them, handed me \$10 to take

COMMON GROUND

them out to dinner. On the way down we met Mr. Bisos again, and when he heard we were going out to dinner, he pulled out \$10 and said the dinner was on him." There is other informal economic assistance given. The chief social worker in Bridgetown reported that the Greeks were outstanding for their self-sufficiency, that when a needy case was reported, by the time the social agency arrived to investigate, the Greeks had already supplied the necessary help.

III

The attitude of the American community toward any racial or nationality group is one of the most important factors in determining whether cultural conflicts shall exist to any great degree. If the majority group observes a great deal of prejudice and expresses this by name-calling, social discrimination, or denial of economic and political privilege, there will inevitably be some in the minority group who will rebel against their race or nationality in an attempt to identify themselves with the dominant American group with its attendant privileges. In Bridgetown there seems to be not only a surprising lack of prejudice, but a great deal of admiration for the Greek group as well. I asked everyone I interviewed whether he or his Greek acquaintances had ever experienced any degree of prejudice on a basis of nationality. Only three could remember any evidences of it:

"Only once since I come to America," said one, "do I see prejudice against the Greeks. I try to rent a house from an old woman and she said, 'I'm sorry, we don't rent this house to foreigners.' I ask her what did she think this war is being fought for, but she didn't answer. I never had no trouble anywhere else."

"I know of only one instance of prejudice and that was against me," said an-

other. "There are two really good sororities at high school, and when I tried to get into one of them they told me they didn't take Jews, Italians, or Greeks. Then they took in a Greek girl who happened to be very popular. I thought this would open the doors, but they told me they had made an exception in her case. I felt hurt at the time but soon forgot about it. Most of the girls feel that they shouldn't want to belong to a club that had those kind of ideas." (The principal of the school later made it clear to me that these sororities have no sanction of the school; that there is pressure on the school from the PTA to exert its influence to discontinue them.)

A third told me: "Although I was senior president and student government president when I was in high school, I was not invited to the parties held by American girls. Neither were the other Greek boys I palled with. I think this was purely on a basis of our nationality." I questioned a friend of this boy, a member of the Greek group referred to, as to the validity of the boy's conclusions. He said the reason for the lack of invitations was that the Greek boys made little effort in school to mix with the American crowd, and he felt there was therefore no ground for assuming a discriminatory attitude on a basis of nationality background.

These cases were definitely exceptional. The more general attitude of the community is better expressed by representative civic officials to whom I talked. An insurance man: "The Greeks here are hard-working, straightforward people. They are big-hearted perhaps to the extreme, but what I like is that they always keep their nose clean. If I had to choose to deal with one nationality in Bridgetown, I'd choose the Greeks." The sheriff: "I've lived in Bridgetown all my life and been in public life for 26 years, and I would say that for moral conduct and for civic participation

THE SPARTAN GREEKS OF BRIDGETOWN: THE SECOND GENERATION

the Greeks have been our outstanding nationality group. I don't recall one arrest for abandonment or for prostitution. There have been no charges of violence, and I never remember a Greek being on relief even during the depression. They are always ready to assist in community affairs as the Community Chest and War Bond drives, and in fact their only fault as far as I am concerned is their gambling. We've had several up here on that charge."

A policeman: "The Greeks are good people. They treat you right. I've never run one in in Bridgetown. Only one I remember is one I stopped for driving sixty without a license and he wasn't from town. When I found out he was Greek, I let him go." *The principal:* "Three of the most outstanding boys to come out of this high school have been Greeks. Personally on the whole I don't consider them any different from Americans and haven't found them better or worse scholastically or morally." *Head social worker:* "For industry and law observance the Greeks have excelled in Bridgetown. They are greatly respected in the community, and you never hear a bad word about even the bookies. The bank has told me that Mr. Kalos could borrow twenty thousand dollars on his name."

With the reputation of their group so high among the members of the American community, it is not strange that the younger members do not hesitate to say, "I'm proud to be a Greek" or to identify themselves as each did, as a "Greek American."

There appear to be several reasons for the lack of prejudice in Bridgetown. The Greeks are numerically the smallest of the significant minority groups (Negroes, Poles, Italians, Irish), and do not present themselves as severe economic competitors of the old-stock members of the community. Also, the mores of the old country encouraged great respect for authority

whether familial or civic. Furthermore, the Greeks seem unusually conscious of their minority status and constantly reiterate the importance of "keeping clean the good Greek name."

Concerning the first point little need be said. Ordinarily, the amount of prejudice varies proportionately with the amount of economic competition created by the minority group. The Greeks present a significant competitive group in but one area, the restaurant business, and do not as the Italian, Polish, Negro, and other groups form a strong working-class competitive group. In a study of Italian Americans made in New Haven, where considerable prejudice and cultural conflict were found, the Italian Americans composed 25 per cent of the population. Again, the middle-class position of most of the Greeks puts them, structurally at least, in the "respectable" class, unlike the other minority groups of the community which are largely in the lower class.

As for respect for authority, several decades ago the family system of Greece was strongly patriarchal. A rural economy and centuries of religious and political monarchy supported, as well as gained much of their support from, a type of family system in which the father was king over the household. When the Greeks came to America, this custom was brought with them and is one of the last cultural characteristics the group abandons. In Bridgetown almost every Greek adult enumerated as one of the chief differences between Greeks and Americans the manner of rearing children. The immigrant group maintains that American children do not have sufficient respect for their parents. Greek children are constantly taught that respect for parents, officials, and teachers is of paramount importance. The effect of this upbringing is felt in the American community; Bridgetown high school teachers told me Greek American students

COMMON GROUND

were "unusually reliable," "outstanding for character," "so well behaved."

Along with this policy of inculcating respectful attitudes, the Greeks possess an unusual desire to maintain an unblemished group reputation. "We like to keep the Greek name clean. More than anything else we like to say, 'There goes so-and-so, a Greek, and a darned good man.'" One shopkeeper became quite excited in telling me of an incident concerning a scandal which almost reached the papers. He climaxed his pantomime of the successful efforts to prevent publication of the incident by slapping his hand to his forehead in a pose representing relief after a very narrow escape, in which, "They almost dirtied the good Greek name!"

The methods used in keeping clean the Greek name are carried out in many formal and informal ways, some of which I discussed earlier (Spring, 1948 CG) under the forms of community pressure; but an understanding of the psychology of this attitude is basic to a comprehension of the unity of the Bridgetown Greeks. One middle-aged restaurant-owner articulated one of the reasons for the concern over the group reputation: "I like the Americans to speak good about me and our people. When you go to a strange house, you gonna be grateful for being invited. We come to this country like guests invited and we gotta be careful, too. We don't want to make mistakes that give us a bad name." The idea of the guest is an interesting one. It shows that despite every outward sign of Americanization (dress, conveniences, patriotism, etc.) and a long period of acculturation (this man, for instance, has been in America for 35 years), the Greek still feels he does not completely belong. He may be the most honored, the most accepted, the most fully "at home" guest in the house, but he still realizes that his status is somewhat that of the guest; correspondingly he feels

the slight self-consciousness, the constant need to be on one's guard, the ever-present necessity of proving one's self that many conscientious long-staying guests feel in the house of a friend.

Another middle-aged Greek expressed the feeling of self-consciousness in regard to the hard-working qualities of the Greeks: "Another reason why the Greeks work so much harder here than they did in Greece is this: they came here with the handicap of being foreigners, not knowing the language, etc.; have always felt a little self-conscious and have worked harder to compensate for it." A second-generation girl remarked: "The Greeks can't seem to forget themselves. They are always watching out for their conduct and behavior, particularly around Americans." The immigrant feels that with one strike against him he can afford no chances. As part of a minority group in a foreign country, economic survival and social acceptance depends upon the name of the Greeks in general. That the Greeks recognize the tendency of American society to identify the individual with his group is shown by the angry comment of a second-generation girl: "Yes, because we're a minority the paper always plays up our nationality when something happens. When an 'American' does something, it's always so-and-so does it, but let a Greek do it and you'll see Greek does so-and-so plastered over the headlines."

The Greek, then, feels he must to a large degree sink or swim on the reputation of his group; correspondingly, he attempts to keep the reputation high. Fortunately the particular Greek mores of familial and civic respect happen to be efficacious means toward this end, and much of the lack of prejudice in Bridgetown is explained by the coincidence of this desire of the Greeks to maintain a high group reputation and their efficient cultural means of achieving it.

THE SPARTAN GREEKS OF BRIDGETOWN: THE SECOND GENERATION

IV

Despite the relatively smooth-functioning relationship between the two generations in Bridgetown, there is one area where definite rebellious attitudes are found in the second generation. This is the general rebellion against the powerful gossip mores of the community. Gossip is the Greek's best informal weapon. (More formal community weapons were discussed in the Spring 1948 *COMMON GROUND*.) With his strong sentiments toward keeping members of the community in line and his general attitude toward keeping the Greek name clean, the Greek still lacks most of the formal means of coercion he had in Greece. Living in an alien community where the mores of the homeland are threatened rather than taken for granted as they were in Greece, he finds gossip the most effective technique for preserving his values.

The power of gossip is great, particularly among the women, whose only opportunities for prestige and recognition are within the Greek group (their language deficiencies and cultural propensities preclude a significant amount of mixture with Americans). Gossip is their greatest weapon and their greatest fear. Said one "upper-class" girl: "My mother is terribly afraid of other Greeks talking about us. I say, 'Let them talk. Why should you care what they say?' And she always says, 'But I do.'" Contrast her attitude with that of another woman who told me: "What nationality neighbor would I like? Anybody but the Greek. They are too superstitious. They talk and gossip all the time. If they see me talk to a man, they think I am bad and they talk. . . . When I go to a Greek house and I come back, I feel that my heart is full of hate and sadness. They criticize too much. When I come back from an

American house, I feel full of pep and happiness."

The two attitudes are quite different, yet typical of the two groups they represent. The mother of the girl spoke very little English, was strongly Greek acculturated, was a pillar of the Greek community. Reared in a typical rural Greek village with its strong gossip customs, with limited contacts with the American community, and powerful identification with the Greek community, she can realize no alternative to in-group activity. But the second woman is much more Americanized, prefers Americans to Greeks, has more American friends. To her the American mores of "live and let live" seem preferable, and, since there is an alternative which can be chosen by her, there is conflict. She is vindictive against the Greeks for their "superstitious ways" and their gossip, while many stauncher members of the community feel she is entirely too liberal, is going "high hat" on them by choosing American friends. Her predicament is similar to that of the second generation. They are exposed to two value systems. Reared in a Greek family and mixing largely with Greeks, they learn respect for their elders, learn that they are responsible to the group and liable to group criticism for their conduct. But in the American schools and with their American friends they find attitudes which are not so stringent. Although there is much gossip in American circles, on the whole the modern American mores tend toward the pole of individualism and minding one's own business. Once learning that there is another value system open to him (and one favored by the majority group), the exuberant adolescent may quickly develop an avoidance pattern to what he considers the "narrow-mindedness," "backwardness," and "nosiness" of the Greeks.

The situation is quite different for the

COMMON GROUND

two sexes. The boys have learned to avoid those contacts with the Greeks that lead to gossip; but the girls are in no position to choose. A peculiar relation exists between the two sexes of the younger generation in Bridgetown, largely as a result of the reaction to gossip. With such strong in-group feelings, it might be expected there would be extensive in-dating and marriage. Strangely enough, this is not strictly true. My earlier discussion of endogamy (Winter 1948 issue) was based on figures from the 1930 census. Since this time there has been a trend away from in-group marriages. Still there have been 15 marriages between Bridgetown Greeks (second generation) since 1930, a sizable figure to the casual observer, but not to the Greek who anticipates that all marriages will be endogamous. As against this, eighteen intermarriages with non-Greeks have occurred within the past fifteen or twenty years. But more significant is the present state of affairs, in which I found that none of the Greek boys was dating the local Greek girls. This is due to the usually tacit but almost unanimous opinion of the boys that it is too much trouble to date the Greek girls. One boy said he had been "crowd dating" a Greek girl considerably, and decided he would like to take her alone to a dance. When he arrived at the house, the mother said, "Do you expect to go out alone?" When he said yes, she answered, "Not with my daughter!" The date was cancelled, and the following night, when he dated an American girl "whose mother trusts me with her daughter," the mother of his Greek girl friend chanced to see him. She refused to speak to him after this.

Said another boy, recently discharged from the Army: "I've dated Greek girls only a couple of times in Bridgetown. I don't want to have to tell her mother where we've been and what we did. I want to be trusted. It's not the girls' fault.

They want to go out as much as anyone. . . . At the dances it's just as bad, with the parents sitting around. We call them the M.P.'s."

The Greeks, so accustomed to matching marriages and to having the wedding preceded by a minimum of courtship, cannot come to understand the American dating customs. A date to the average woman of the community is the outward sign of an engagement, and immediately she spreads the news. I know how rapid, extensive, and often insidious this gossip can be. I was seen occasionally with one of the unmarried girls whom I relied upon for considerable information. The gossip began at once that I was about to become engaged to her. This rumor reached my parents from friends in *another* city!

Said a girl in her late twenties, working for a Greek wholesale company: "It's the girls who get it worst and it's not their fault. It's the parents. The girl has got to come right home after a movie; the boy can stay out all night. If she stops on the corner and talks to a boy, the Greeks see her and right away they start to talk about her. If Americans see them, they say, 'Who was that lovely couple?' They are really too narrow-minded. I used to work for Mr. Chios, and he used to drive me home every day. Pretty soon the news was around that he was getting a divorce and marrying me. Now that I work here, whichever of the boys happens to be free drives me home after work. When I first started it was too much for the Greeks. They had me married to a different one every day! They can't conceive of a non-sexual or business relationship between two young unmarried people of different sexes."

Steve Xenides, a sophomore in a local college, disclosed a typical avoidance policy toward the girls and a general dislike of the Greeks on the grounds that they interfere in what he considered his "own

THE SPARTAN GREEKS OF BRIDGETOWN: THE SECOND GENERATION

business.” His remarks indicated few of the positive tendencies toward the Greek culture manifested by his older brother Peter, which I reported earlier in this discussion. Said Steve: “I went with a Greek girl once for a month or so, but it was the first and last time. It wasn’t long before the Greeks had rumors going around about our getting married. I stopped going with her because of this, and have made it a policy to stay away from Greek girls. It’s not the girls’ fault. They have two strikes against them. Most of the fellows around here don’t want to go with them because they know that immediately the Greeks will start to talk, and gossip will be all over town in no time.

“When you take a Greek girl home after a date and her parents are up, they want to know where you’ve been and what you did. If they don’t see you then, they’ll ask you the next day. All this keeps the boys away, and yet the Greeks expect their daughters to go out with Greek boys. They used to encourage it quite a bit. You’d meet them in Church and they’d say, ‘Why don’t you take my daughter out and have a good time?’ It’s been said to me right in front of the girl. The woman asked me to take her daughter to a dance. It’s a good thing I already had a date. Since the war, they don’t seem to do so much of this. I think they’ve given up.

“All the restaurants in town are Greek, and when you go into one of them for a sandwich after you’ve been out at night, they usually want to know why you are out so late and then tell you you shouldn’t be. I told one fellow to mind his own business once, and he doesn’t do much talking any more.

“Greek dancing is all right. I like it but I prefer American dancing and American dances. Sometimes a group dance is O.K., but usually I prefer a partner. The Greeks go for group activity. They like group singing and gang dates. This is O.K., too,

but usually I prefer to have a partner. To me it doesn’t make any difference whether I marry a Greek or an American. Of course it would make it a lot easier for my parents and hers if she were Greek. Yes, I’d like a Greek dish once in a while, but it really wouldn’t matter too much. If my wife was Greek, I’d probably teach my children Greek, but I wouldn’t insist on it.”

This pattern of avoidance was consistent throughout the young male population. Although all the boys enjoy Greek food, parties, dancing, language, etc., they avoid those activities which will create gossip. Since dating a Greek girl is the easiest way to create the gossip, the community girls are methodically avoided. Here the line of least resistance happens to be the American dating custom, and, with the freedom of choice granted them by the double standard, the boys choose to avoid the Greek girls. This does not mean they are deprived of dates. They date out-of-town Greek girls and local American girls.

For the Greek girls, however, no such solution is at hand. The double standard is more stressed than in American society, and, if Greek boys will not date them, they simply go undated. For most of the Bridgetown Greek girls, American dating is seldom permitted and then never without a conflict between daughter and parents. Since the activities of the girls are more restricted, more closely watched, and more severely judged than are those of the boys, it is from the girls that most of the protest comes. From an “upper-class” girl who showed a strong positive reaction to Greek culture in every other respect came the complaint: “The only trouble with the Greeks is that they are too narrow-minded about the girls. I know one man in town that thinks if a girl smokes she’s, well, a prostitute. I smoke but not in front of my brother. He doesn’t want to

see it. We had an accident (a mixed bunch of us) late at night and it was around that we were all drunk. We hadn't been drinking; and if we hadn't been with our cousins—well—"

Tension was apparent in several of the girls either as a result of the general restrictions enforced upon them or of the avoidance of the boys. One girl made an appointment with me, then failed to appear. Her sister, after some discussion, confessed that her sister became too excited when she spoke about the Greeks and had decided not to see me. Another was obviously undergoing considerable tension when she told me she had stood enough from the Greeks and was now pulling away from them entirely. "I've always been proud of the fact that I am a Greek," she said, "but I can't help pulling away from them. Religion is now my strongest tie with them. The Greek parents feel that no American is good enough for their child. I was engaged to an American fellow and he broke it because of the kind of treatment he got from my parents. I'm sick of the petty things the Greeks will bring up against the Americans. Take the matter of the Rialto dance. The parents all objected because they weren't invited. No American girl brings her parents to her dances. I'm going where I enjoy myself, and it's not with girls all the time. I like to go out and not just with Greeks. This meets with my family's wholehearted disapproval, but I don't care any more; there's just no gain in hanging around the Greeks. And there's some kind of a frigid feeling between the Greek boys and girls of this town. I don't know why it is, but they just don't mix. I'm not going to sit around and wait for some uncle to fix up a marriage for me. I sometimes wonder if it's this way with the Greek kids in other cities in America. I just don't know."

The sense of frustration is emphasized

because all the girls seem to prefer Greek boys to American as a result of their rigorous training in the home and community in the Greek culture. Said a college girl: "I have more fun on dates with Greek boys. You just seem to get along better, and there is more to talk about. You can always come out with something in Greek. I definitely want a Greek for a husband. For a date, either is O.K. (Greek or American), but when it comes to marriage I want a man who has religion, customs, and ideas similar to mine." Said another girl of marriageable age: "I wouldn't be happy with an American husband. I definitely want a Greek one. You have so much more in common. There is more ground to discuss things, and it eliminates a lot of barriers like religion, customs, etc. The language helps, too. In American a certain remark might be just plain stupid, but in Greek it's really funny."

In an attempt to deal with this situation the girls have adopted various but ineffectual means. A youth group was organized to bring together the young people for weekly or bimonthly dances. The founder told me: "The mothers just won't let their daughters out and yet they want to marry them off to Greek boys. Only about 25 per cent of the Greek girls in town are allowed to date. That's why I started this youth organization and didn't want them to bring American kids to the dances. I saw the Greek girls sitting around on a shelf and I figured this was the only way to get them to mix with Greek boys."

But male attendance was so poor, and those attending (reputedly because of parental compulsion) so unco-operative that the scheme is now considered a failure. Recently the girls decided to hold a formal dance, the Rialto Hotel dance already referred to, at which parents would be barred and coupling would be allowed.

THE SPARTAN GREEKS OF BRIDGETOWN: THE SECOND GENERATION

These concessions to Americanism were made with the idea that once these barriers were removed, the Greek boys would prove more co-operative. Since the dance was largely instigated by the girls of the community, it was acknowledged that they could invite their partners. I found that while nine-tenths of the girls invited their dates, they were refused almost en masse by the Greek boys of the community. They were forced to ask American boys and out-of-town Greek boys. Greek boys dated American girls and out-of-town Greek girls. Approximately fifty to sixty couples attended the dance, and about 35 non-Greek dates were mixed in the coupling.

This situation caused considerable controversy. Said a middle-aged Greek woman: "It's a crime that the young Greek boys want American girls. Once these boys marry outsiders, they are lost to the community." The girls expressed considerable chagrin at their rejections, and the priest disclosed that a meeting was soon to be held (one for the boys and one for the girls) to discuss the general obstacles in the way of in-group dating, with the hope of reaching a solution. The suggested meeting was indignantly talked down by the boys, however, largely on the grounds that, "Maybe if the Greeks would let us alone more, we would get together. They're always trying to promote deals!"

The problem is not a new one. Ever since the boys have been old enough to gain substantial emancipation from their families, they have avoided the Greek girls. The net result has been that there is an excessively large number of unmarried Greek girls in the community, many between the ages of 23 and 40. In rural Greece an unmarried girl in her twenties was considered a distinct anomaly, was looked upon askance; her parents lost much prestige. Every sort of aid and pressure is brought to bear upon the girls to

marry, and these attitudes have been little changed in America. A 24-year-old girl told me that she was constantly receiving "lectures" from her worried father because of her indifference toward marriage. Her father brings eligible boys to the house and talks to the daughter about proposals he has been offered concerning her. She had just received an "ultimatum" from him to the effect that she must decide upon a marriage partner within the month, "or he will."

It has developed, then, that the Greeks' biggest and most embarrassing problem is their large crop of single girls and the refusal of the boys to date these girls. It is too late for local alleviation of the problem now. The boys early found the American dating customs much more preferable, and formed their habit patterns along these lines. From their point of view there is nothing to be gained from dating Greek girls.

Yet while the boys can avoid that part of the Greek culture which causes them discomfort, the girls can find no such easy solution. American dating brings upon them much more censure than it does the boys; and since they are closer to their parents, their Church, their community, and have fewer American friends than do the boys, their lot is indeed an unhappy one. In the face of the unbending mores, the girls are either "sticking it out till the old folks die," or, in the face of severe maladjustment, beginning to reject the Greeks en masse because they feel "there's just no gain in hanging around the Greeks."

V

The tidal wave of Greek immigration to America has evaporated to a trickle. The Greeks of the early decades of this century who sought American shores for political security and economic improvement are now solidly established citizens

COMMON GROUND

of this nation. There is hardly a town without the friendly "Greek" behind the counter of his own establishment, and hardly a city without a Greek of civic distinction. Official police records prove that these people possess an unusual respect for American laws, while the statistics of Greek organizations demonstrate an equally strong respect for the traditions and ways of life of their native land.

But the Greeks of yesterday and today will not be the Greeks of tomorrow. The generation of young Greeks who now comprise the bulk of Greek organizations will soon be the main representatives of the Greek people in America. It is they who are to determine "The Greek Name," and whether it will be regarded with respect or disdain by members of the American community.

This group possesses little of the pioneer spirit of their fathers, and none of the nostalgic memories of the old country. While they speak Greek, they prefer English; and while they enjoy the Kaspico, in general they would rather jitterbug. The handwriting on the wall is clear. In the near future the Greeks who count will be the young Greek Americans of today. The older Greeks are successfully established, highly respected, well unified. The problems of achieving unity of Greek American citizens is one which must deal chiefly with unifying the younger second-generation Greek Americans. What can be done?

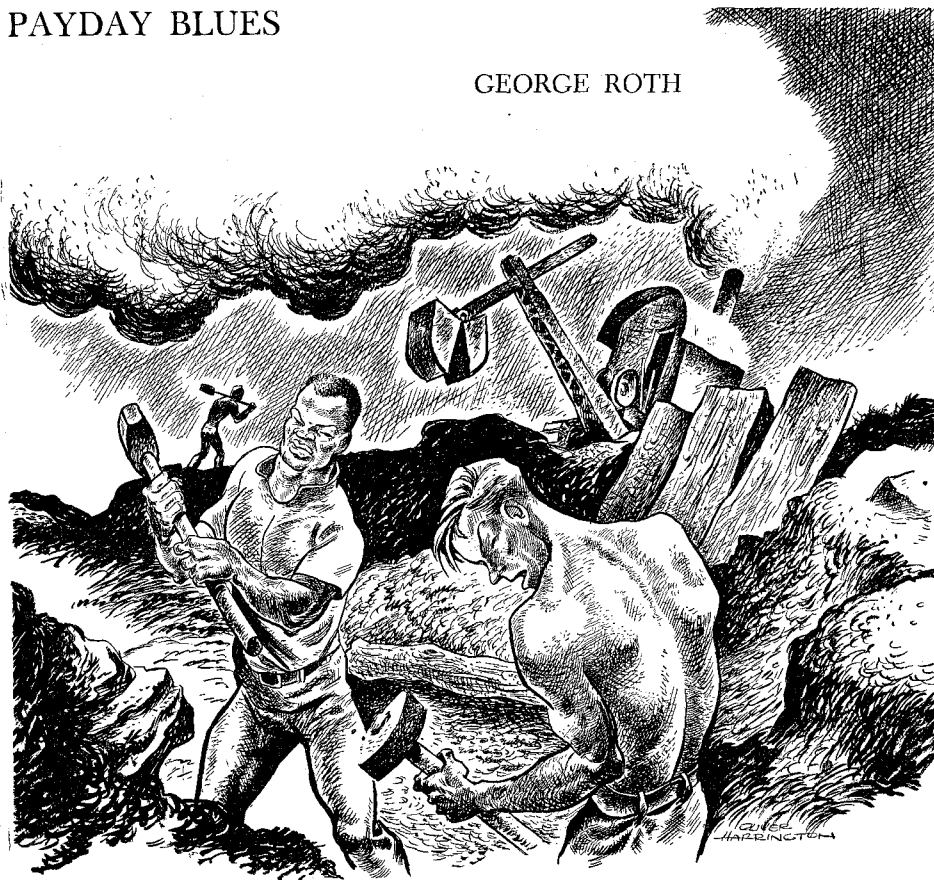
First there must be concessions to

Americanism. The young generation will maintain their ties with Greek culture only if that culture is attractive and beneficial. Growing up in America, they *must* be Americans; they will be Greeks too only if Greek culture and co-operation with the Greeks are assets in their lives, not handicaps to self-fulfillment. Therefore, the task of the parents is to try to transmit to their children those elements of Greek culture which are essentially not in conflict with American ways of life, and to discard those customs which will lead to conflict, and, resultingly, to abandonment of all association with the Greek way of life.

If for a unified Greek America, some of the more conservative aspects of Greek culture must be abandoned, so must the more attractive elements of the culture be transmitted to the young. Materially these things consist of Greek dancing, singing, and cuisine. But far more important are the distinctly Greek attitudes of mind—generosity, friendliness, and a democratic spirit of fair play. Let each community have its Greek teacher, let each Son of Pericles and Maid of Athens come to know his heritage and his national history through that nation's tongue, let each Greek parent be responsible for impressing upon his children the favorable aspects of Greek culture, and *avoiding those outmoded elements which clash with American customs*—and the unity of the Greek American citizens of tomorrow is assured.

PAYDAY BLUES

GEORGE ROTH



IN THE bull pen outside the employment shack of the Sampson Construction Company impatient men milled about, talking, laughing, cursing the slow procedure, anxious for the lines to move ahead so that they could be hired. Lean, long-limbed Andy Brewer stamped his feet and watched the dust spurt and settle in tan film on his shoes. He had hitchhiked to the project that morning from the university, attracted by the advertisement in the newspapers: "Men Wanted for Reconversion Project. Good Wages. Plenty Overtime."

Obviously the ads had been widespread and the workman grapevine had carried the news thoroughly, for there were hundreds thronging about the office: men from Hoboken and Harlem, from Brooklyn and Buffalo, singly and in groups, by train and by car, lured by the chance to collect capital before the summer was over. Andy Brewer, interested in earning enough for next semester's tuition, wasn't sure whether or not he liked being one of them.

The sun was low behind the solitary tree in the clearing when Andy left the

COMMON GROUND

shack. He was weary from waiting to be interviewed, fingerprinted, and finally dismissed as a card in the files. The small slip in his hand read: Area 4—8 AM—Burt Dewaine, Foreman. He smiled sarcastically. "Well, brilliant sociology student, get ready for a long summer."

In Geneva, the nearest town of any size, men swarmed through the streets, looking for rooms and places to eat. Rent and food prices were boosted. Cots were placed in attics, beds moved into parlors, space made for transients.

"It's a cost twenny dollar a week. Musta be pay ahead," said the old woman, and Andy paid, thankful to find room and board even though the wall paper was peeling and the ceiling as ditched and dingy as dirty corduroy, glad he wasn't one of the hordes still searching through the streets.

In the morning he spent his last money for a weekly bus ticket and a pack of cigarettes. When he reached the project he punched in his time card and searched out Burt Dewaine, foreman.

"You sure got yourself on some crew," Burt Dewaine said. "You'll think you're in Africa."

"What do you mean?" Andy asked.

"All colored boys," the foreman said. "You're the only white worker in the gang. Check out a pick and shovel over at the tool shed. We're digging foundation—deep foundation."

"O.K.," Andy said.

"And if you want a transfer, you'll have to see the supervisor."

"I'll be O.K.," said Andy. "Work is work."

The foundation ditch was already six feet deep, and Andy began to work, digging into the clayish rocky dirt, throwing it up onto the ledge. He felt the hostility of the colored men and tried to ignore it, but uneasy embarrassment made his motions clumsy. He was con-

stantly aware of being different and felt that special hurt, the sense of being alone among people. Automatically he kicked the shovel in and heaved the dirt out of the hole, moving as slowly as possible, for he was no novice at labor and knew the ache of unused muscles, the strain on sinew, when hard work is attacked too suddenly and enthusiastically.

"I been diggin this hole so long, I feel like a mole," a young boy with an underlip like a saucer complained.

"Man, you is a mole. Das what we'll call you. Mole. Where you from, Mole?"

"Trenton, New Jersey," the Mole said.

"Man, you have to be a mole to live in a town like that. Me, now I come from a real city, Harlem—that's my town. My name's Brown."

"You name Brown?" asked a tall, very black man, with the broad shoulders and stoop of a professional digger. "Das me, too!"

"Well, you be Big Brown. I'll be Little Brown. That's how we tell us apart."

"Who dat Foxy Grampa over side a you with the glasses?"

"Das right, I da Fox," said the husky boy, whose face sloped forward terminating in a long pointed nose, giving him a close resemblance to an animal. "Man, I can't be a wolf, so I be a Fox."

"What's your name, Pop?" Little Brown asked of a small wiry old man whose hair was tinged with grey.

The old man looked up with sad, watery eyes and started to speak, but said nothing. He returned to his slow steady digging with the pick.

"I guess he jes Pop!"

"I'se Slick," said a young boy, who wore pegged pants with sharp creases, topped by a maroon shirt. His zoot jacket was hung over the handle of a shovel that had been stuck into the ground.

"You're sure gonna get those purty duds dirty," said Little Brown. "What

PAYDAY BLUES

you doing working in them classy clothes?"

"Man, I come up fum Georgia to be a lover," Slick said. "But I went bust fore I got any lovin."

Deep-throated laughter sounded. Little Brown leaned over and slapped his legs. "Oh man, oh man," he chuckled.

Slick turned to Andy. "Whut you laughin at, white-boy?"

The grin faded from Andy's face. "I thought that was funny," he said.

"You better jes watch who you laughin at, boy. I ain't out to take no guff fum white boys, now I outta the South."

"I wasn't laughing at you. I was laughing at what you said."

"Well, watch you step, boy. I got me a big knife, an I plenty tough, boy." Slick's hand was in his pocket, his eyes sullen.

"Let dat boy be. He ain't done nothin to ya," said Big Brown.

Andy's knuckles were white with the intensity of his grip on the shovel handle. He flushed with anger yet felt sympathy for the boy from the South. If he pulls his knife, he thought, I'll have to hit him with the shovel.

"Leave loose that shovel, boy," said Little Brown, chuckling. "He's only a kid. He ain't gonna do no cuttin round here."

Andy grinned, and his homely face became friendly, an ugly sincere grin. The tightness relaxed. "I wasn't trying to make fun of him."

"He's jes a little touchy," said Little Brown. "What's your name, boy? If we gonna work in the same hole, we gotta know how to call you."

"My name is Andy—Andy Brewer."

Little Brown looked at Big Brown. "Oh, Lordy, Mr. Brown, ain't that a sad name?"

"Sho is, Mr. Brown."

"Well, Mr. Brown, what we gonna call this boy?"

"Don't know, Mr. Brown. Gotta call him somepin."

"Mr. Brown, I think we gonna call this boy Whitey, then we won't get him mixed up."

"Das a good idea, Mr. Brown. Mr. Brown, meet Mr. Whitey."

"Howjado, Mr. Whitey."

Andy grinned widely and felt a warm friendship for the others, for work is hard and boring, and men working together look to each other for conversation, for something to occupy their minds, to dull the sense of monotony. Although he still felt uncomfortable, he began to enjoy the talk, found himself pleased by the melody of their laughter, the dark sadness that comes from a Negro's throat when he leans his head back and laughs at something small and casual, as though he felt laughter to be the secret of happiness.

By the time the noon whistle blew, Andy felt the gnawing of hunger and drank many dippers of water to ward off the craving for food. Until he was paid, he would just have to do without lunches. He sat on the ledge inhaling deeply on a cigarette, while the rest of the crew went to the stand where the company sold sandwiches, milk, and soda. He dozed off in the warm sun and was awakened by Big Brown.

"What you doin, boy, goin on a diet?" Big Brown asked.

"No, I'm broke," Andy said. "I'm not very hungry anyhow."

"Nuts wid dat stuff, boy. You cain't work widdout eatin. I got some money. Here, I lend you some."

"Gee, thanks, but I don't want to cut into your money. You'll need it yourself," Andy said, his pride conflicting terribly with his hunger.

"Lissen, boy, I ain't gonna work on no job wid no boy what don't got no lunch in him. Here, you can pay me back next

COMMON GROUND

payday." Big Brown passed a five-dollar bill.

"Gosh, thanks a lot. Gee, I appreciate that. I'll pay you back as soon as I get paid," Andy said.

"Damn right you will," said Big Brown.

Andy filled his mouth with sandwich and gulped milk, and the fullness of his stomach made him feel strong. He was grateful, as a hungry belly is for food.

In the afternoon another man joined the crew. He was a mulatto in his early thirties, his face peppered with small purple scars. Powerful glasses made his eyes seem small and far away. "T'se Russel," he said, and began mumbling about the dirty white trash at the employment shack.

"What's a matter, boy?" asked the Fox.

"Man, I ain't no damn laborer. I a cat skinner. I done shoved more dirt round wid a Caterpillar dan most dem guys ever saw, but dey don't give me no job. Dey ain't hiring no colored skimmers for dis job."

"Why not?" asked Andy.

"Why you think, why not, boy? War's over. Plenty white men can drive a tractor. Don't need us no more."

"It's not very fair," Andy said sincerely.

"Sho am hell to be a colored man," said the Fox, and laughed.

The Mole pushed his hat far forward on his forehead, bent at the hips, and thumped his shovel handle, holding it as an instrument. "Bump . . . Bump . . . Bump," he hummed, then improvised words to a basic blues theme.

"Gotta little baby-doll-gal in Trenton
Jes waitin for dat Mole to get back.
She gonna give me plenty lovin
When I show her my pocket full a jack.
Oh Lordy, got dem waiting for next pay-
day blues."

"I didn't think they had any gals in

Trenton, Mole," said Little Brown. "You mean you got a sweet-gal down there?"

"You betcha. Boy, when I get back that old town's gonna stand up and shout, cause when Mole gets in, there's action." The Mole's body waved in slow rhythm.

"I jes tell my honey, listen baby, you see this green, see this roll of frogskins? Well, honey, hurry up and pour yourself into a dress, cause we gonna go out and spend it. Then I give the boys a treat. I drop in on every joint to show her off and drink some of that fine gin. Then we have us some them long-necked clams, and man, we ready for home."

"Boy, I think you a lying old poppa," said the Fox.

"Man," the Mole said, slapping his pocket and rolling his eyes. "Them gals know when the Mole around with jingle in his jeans."

"Hey, Whitey. You got a gal?" Little Brown asked.

"Yeah! I've got a girl back home," Andy said.

"You white boys must get awful tired of your women."

"Why's that?" asked Andy.

"A white man ain't got no variety. All you got to tell 'em apart is is they fat or skinny, purty or ugly. Now a colored man, he can get gals all shades. A colored man he can get a little change between women."

"I guess you're right there," Andy said, laughing.

"Dat Whitey ain't a bad guy, for a white boy," Russel said to Slick.

"Das right, he all right," Slick said.

Andy overheard them and felt proud. He was one of the crew, part of the unit molded by the heat of the sun, the catalyst of work. He knew the summer wouldn't be so difficult to bear. He liked the men, enjoyed their talk, had been caught in the contagious whirlpool of their laughter.

PAYDAY BLUES

Days passed. Some fast. Some slow, agonizing, minute-counting days, and after work Andy rode the bus into Geneva, ate dinners which were starchy and meatless, then went to his room and read until his eyelids drooped, and the words lost form. Then his hand would



flick the light switch, and his work-weary muscles relaxed. Eagerly he checked the days, waiting for payday, when he could seek more expensive and amusing recreation.

At the end of the week the foreman turned the crew over to a straw boss. The huge Negro named Buck, whose muscles bunched and crawled like serpents under the dark skin of his torso, looked down into the ditch. "I your new boss," he said, his sugar-cube teeth flash-

ing a grin, which revolved to reflect upon each man. When he saw Andy, the grin dissolved. "All right, white-boy, you can go get a transfer any time you want. We all colored on dis crew. White folks ain't mostly likin to work wid colored."

Andy flushed with embarrassment and anger. "I'm not asking for any transfer," he said, grinding his teeth.

"Well, you might as well, boy. We black and you white."

The theories of social science raced through Andy's mind, and he searched for something to say which would lash the black complacency on the ledge. It was all words. Nothing fit. Nothing that these men would understand. But he was their friend. He had worked with them, laughed and joked, even sung with them. The difference in color had ceased to exist in his mind, but suddenly it was thrown back, the wall, the barrier society had built between them.

"Listen," he said. "I've been working on this crew all week. I like the men I work with, and now you think you can throw me off, just because I'm white. What the hell difference is it what color I am or you are? I'm just as goddamn good as you are, and you're just as good as I am."

"Listen, white-boy! Don't holler up here at me. I you boss, even if I is black as the inside a furnace."

"Well, I'm mad," Andy said. "And if you want me off the crew, you can kick me off yourself. I'm not asking for a transfer."

"Man, oh man," said Buck. "He sho a funny white-boy. I give him a chance to save a lot of trouble. You is the guys what gotta work wid him. You want him left?"

"Whitey's a good boy," Little Brown said.

"Sure, he all right," Russel said.

The rest nodded their heads.

COMMON GROUND

"Looks like you gonna be round a while longer," Buck said and walked away.

"Dat man sho don't like you guts," Big Brown said. "You watch out. He make trouble."

"You should a got off dis crew," the Fox said. "Colored gangs gonna always catch the bum work."

"The hell with him," Andy said, his mind toying with the irony of Buck's remarks.

That afternoon the sun blazed furiously. Hot breezes blew mists of dust, and thirsty men lined up at the water bucket, wiping perspiration from their chests and arms, splashing their faces and rinsing their mouths, afraid to drink too much.

Buck stood on the ledge smiling into the trench, his denim shirt unbuttoned, blue shirt tails dangling almost to his knees. "Hey, Pop," he said. "Whut for you tryin finish dat hole all by youself? Leave dat pick be, and plunk you rusty-dusty down for while."

Pop just looked up with wet eyes and returned to steady swinging of the pick in small arcs.

"What's de matter wid old Pop?" asked Buck. "He cain't talk or somepin?"

"Sure old Pop can talk. Maybe he got nothin to say," said Russel.

"Maybe old Pop he got too much to say," said Big Brown. "Maybe what inside him, he ain't got no word to say it."

"When it comes to workin, that old man, he's sure in the groove," said the Mole.

"Old man gonna dig dat groove into a grave, don't he slow down," said Buck sadly. "Go easy dere, Pop," he pleaded.

Pop's pick flashed in the sun and thudded, loosening chunks of dirt.

"Maybe old Pop he don't give no damn about livin no more," Buck said thoughtfully.

A block of solid slate lodged in the side-wall of the trench. Andy and Russel

used pick, shovel, and crowbar trying to undermine it, but the slate was well imbedded.

Buck twirled his plumb line. A quick snap of his wrist sent it over the wire. It touched the rock, leaving eight inches extending within the line. "Man, we gonna have to smash dat baby down. Hey, you, white-boy! Gwan up and get two sledges from de shed. Sixteen pound sledges."

Andy brought back the heavy tools.

"Awright, white-boy. You stand dere, and I stand here. Fust I swing. Den you swing. An make dat sledge handle bend, white-boy."

Andy swung the heavy sledge, and splinters shattered from the solid stone. Buck swung his sledge with the ease of a baseball batter knocking grounders to the infield. He stepped in, and the iron slammed slate, cracking it. Small slabs slipped from the surface.

"C'mon, boy," Buck said, his grin contemptuous. "Les see how good you are."

Andy realized it was a contest. He felt years of resentment, waiting to be revenged, in the big Negro's voice.

He kept lifting and slamming sledge to stone, and muscles in arms and shoulders began to ache. His teeth clenched and gritted in furious anger. It hurt when the other man easily took his blows and smiled, saying, "Les see dat handle bend, white-boy."

Numbness came to his arms, but he kept working. Abdominal muscles tugged; it seemed the strain would pull his intestines into his throat. Even the calves of his legs ached, and sweat spurted from his pores. Rasping, involuntary groans came from his dry mouth. "Once more," he would think. "Just once more!"

The easy voice taunted him. "Les see how good you are, white-boy."

The arms could no longer lift. Perspira-

PAYDAY BLUES

tion burned in his eyes, and he fought against swirling dizziness. His numb fingers let the sledge handle slip from his grasp.

Buck smiled his conquest. "Well, well. White-boy looks like he tired awready. Now ain't dat a shame?"

The other men laughed.

Old Pop brought a cup of cool water and put it to Andy's lips. The sweet wetness loosened the adhesion of tongue to palate, and the pointed sense of defeat pierced his fury. His words were quiet. "All right, Buck. What have you proven?"

"I guess we can see now who de better man."

"You mean who is the stronger man."

"In the ditch it the same thing."

"You've been picking on me all day, Buck. Now what do you want me to do?" Andy smiled deep inside, thinking satirically, I'm being persecuted because of my color, and he knew that he had learned something the social science texts could never reveal.

Russel stepped forward hesitantly. "Das right, Buck. You pickin on him. Whyn't you let him be? He a straight boy. Ain't done you no harm."

"Das right," Buck said, his face contorting with hate and contempt. "I been pickin on him. Why shouldn't I do a little pickin when I got a chance? How bout the times I been picked on? Ever since I little and bowlegged, I got name-called and pushed around. You think it fun for me, when little puny white-trash call me, Hey you nigger, coon, dinge, black-bottom—when they keep the dirty jobs for me—when they fire me from work cause I black? I worked hard a long time to get a chance to pick on somebody my own self."

"I know how you feel," Andy said. "But it isn't my fault. I didn't make it that way. What can I do about it?"

"The boy's right, Buck," said Little

Brown. "He's a square boy. He never ain't said a bad word against colored folks."

"Who I gonna pick on den?" Buck snarled.

Big Brown said, "Whitey right. Man, it ain't his fault. No need pickin on him."

"Who I gonna pick on den?" Buck repeated, and his eyes became dull. "Do I jes gotta go long like always, sayin, Yes suh, mister white-man, boss! Can I kiss you feet? Can I shine you shoes?"

"I don't know," Andy said.

Buck stripped off his shirt and hung it over the crowbar to dry. He picked up the sledge and poised in front of the slate. "Maybe old Pop dere got the idea. Jes work and don't say nothin. Jes wait round for to die." He began swinging the sledge with fury, the muscles leaping and bulging, coiling and writhing beneath the sweat-shiny skin, until it seemed they would pull apart. Chips and slivers of slate flew wildly at the smash of metal on rock, and as Andy watched the magnificently molded Negro exert his body to express the resentment and rage and the hurt and frustration of his life, feeling the feebleness of his animal strength against an element harder than stone, more difficult to see than air, he felt sudden sympathy and admiration for Buck.

"He mean," Big Brown said. "His daddy got lynched down South."

The stone splintered and cracked until just a jagged nub remained. Buck leaned on the sledge handle, his khaki army trousers dark with dampness. "Stay round, white-boy," he said grinning. "I not always mean."

Andy smiled. The unit again became one, and the men kidded away the time. They worked together. They were friends.

"Man, it's payday," Little Brown said, chuckling and dancing in the sticky clay. "Cross my palm with that green! C'mon

Mr. Sampson Company. Drop that little envelope in my hand!"

Nervous excitement filled the men. Even Pop paused every few minutes to glance over the ledge, shading his eyes, looking for the truck to arrive.

In the time it took the truck to drive one-eighth mile, from the edge of the area to the timekeeper's shack, a line of over a hundred men had formed, pushing, jostling, cheering, eager to feel the reassurance of bills between their fingers and the scrape of coins, for the feel of money is security, and the mere fondling of it produces the pleasure of the things it can be traded for.

After the men had torn the tops off the envelopes and poured cash into their pockets, they returned to their jobs, but they were restless, impatient with the desire to be off and taste the joys that it could buy.

"Tonight gonna be big night for dis little old town," said the Fox.

"Man, we gonna see some action tonight," Andy said, and immediately embarrassment flooded color to his face. Without thinking, he had switched into their speech; long association had him even thinking in it. He was afraid they would think he was making fun of them, mimicking them.

The Mole chuckled. "Oh, my, oh my—we even got old Whitey talkin like us."

Buck laughed loudly. "He learn fast. A little color in dat pale face, and he get long anywhere."

Andy felt complimented and pleased.

When the quitting whistle shrieked its relief, they walked together to the tool shed.

"C'mon you boys, pile in my car, and we go in town and get some good food," Buck said.

"Now you really talkin, boy," said Russel. "Now you really sayin somepin."

"Whitey you say you can stand some nice juicy barbequed ribs?" Buck said.

"You know it, boy. You jes know it."

"Well, hop in. Us get started."

The old car was tightly packed, but Andy leaned back happy, glad to have money in his pocket, pleased to anticipate a lively drinking, eating, talking night, instead of the dullness of his room.

In the town Buck drove slowly through the streets, searching for an interesting place.

"There's a joint over there," Andy said.

"That's no good," Little Brown said.

"That's a white place."

"I know a place other side a town,"

Russel said. "Dey got mighty fancy eatin dere, and three boys playin what really make music."

"Do they really come on, Brother Russel?" the Mole said. "Really give out?"

"Dem cats teaed up so high dey can look down on dat moon!"

"Well, make miles, boy," the Mole said. "Make them wheels turn."

As Buck applied the brakes, the car doors were swinging open. The men jumped out impatiently. From the small café came the moaning of a saxophone backed by the sad urgent boogie bass of the piano.

"Man, we has arrived," Big Brown said.

They went into the brightly lit, loosely furnished place and looked around eagerly.

Andy sniffed the spicy odor of cooking, and his hunger became acute. "Short ribs, here I come," he said.

The bartender, a stocky, short, shiny-faced man, whose mouth was bracketed by curved creases, like a zero between parentheses, eyed the group. "Hey, you boys," he said, "that white-boy cain't stay in here. It ain't lowed."

"Why not?" Buck asked. "He all right. He work wid us."

"Cain't help it. No white folks lowed

in this place. It strictly a colored joint," the bartender said decisively.

"Man, dis boy ain't no ofay trash," said Big Brown. "He one a us boys."

"Sorry! It jes ain't lowed."

"Well, how you like dat," said Buck. "We jes gonna have to find nother place, das all."

"No," Andy said. "That's all right. You boys stay here. I've got a little gal I want to go see anyway." He walked to the door.

"No kiddin, Whitey? You really find a gal in dis town awready?" Russel asked.

"Sure," Andy said. "See you boys on the job in the morning."

"Okay, boy. We'll save you some them sweet spare ribs," said the Mole.

Andy waved and walked quickly outside into the dusk. It wasn't until he had

walked half a block that the terrible dull loneliness saddened him. He could still hear the jazz from the café. "Man, oh man," he said, his voice slurring octaves. "I sho am got dem blues tonight."

George Roth is 24, New York City born, and nomadic. Between bouts of education at Hofstra College, San Diego State College, and Columbia, he has covered most of the United States and Mexico, supporting himself "by about four dozen unskilled jobs" such as gardener, clerk, construction laborer, dishwasher, asylum attendant, freight hustler, bus boy, etc. This is his first published story.

The illustrations are by Oliver Harrington.

• The Press •

THE NEGROES AND THE DRAFT

(An editorial by Max Lerner in PM, April 11, 1948.)

IF THE new draft bill is enacted into law—as is likely to happen despite the vast popular opposition—it will have some rough sledding with the American Negroes.

That, at any rate, is the meaning of one of the most impressive and courageous statements that has ever been made before a Congressional committee by any man, white or black. It was made on March 31, and it has not received nearly as much attention as it deserves. For it opens a new chapter, not only in the history of the American Negroes, and of American military measures, but also in the history of the deadly serious struggle for American democracy.

The two Negro leaders who made the statement are A. Philip Randolph and Grant Reynolds. Randolph has been in many battles for Negro freedom and trade-union rights. He is the head of the union of Sleeping-Car Porters. Neither man fits in with the popular idea of a radical agitator. Randolph is deeply and outspokenly anti-Communist. Reynolds is a Republican, a member of the New York State Commission of Corrections.

But both men mean what they say when they speak out against Jim Crow in the Army. Three weeks ago they saw President Truman, and Randolph told him that "Negroes are in no mood to shoulder another gun for democracy

abroad while they are denied democracy here at home." Truman blew up and said he didn't like to listen to that kind of talk. The delegation asked him whether he did or didn't want to know how the Negroes felt. They were reporting a hard fact to him, and he could take it or leave it.

But when Randolph and Reynolds came up before the Armed Services Committee of the U. S. Senate, they did more than report. They took a stand. Randolph pledged himself to advocate and support among Negro youth an "organized refusal to register or be drafted" unless the draft and the UMT acts embody specific provisions against Jim Crow. He talked of a possible "mass civil disobedience movement along the lines of the magnificent struggles of the people of India against British imperialism." He added: "I personally pledge myself to openly counsel, aid, and abet youth, both white and Negro, to quarantine any Jim Crow conscription system." He said that the Negroes had fought in the war against the Nazis because they saw it as a war against Hitler's racism. "This factor," he said, "is not present in the power struggle between Stalin and the U.S."

This is not idle talk, and Randolph and Reynolds showed that they had coldly measured its consequences, for themselves and for the large mass of Negroes whose view they undoubtedly express. When Sen. Wayne Morse of Oregon showed his sense of shock at the testimony, and pointed out that this might be prosecuted under the legal doctrine of treason, Randolph answered that he knew there would be terrorism against the Negroes, but "we would be willing to absorb the violence, absorb the terrorism, face the music, and take whatever comes. . . . I think that's a price we have to pay to get our democratic rights."

Whether you are sympathetic with Ran-

dolph, or are shocked as Sen. Morse was shocked, you must recognize two facts about it. First, that it is a historic statement, one that took the kind of courage of going into battle in the face of enemy fire. Second, that it presents a far more important question in the security of American democracy than all the debates about the draft, UMT, atom bombs, and a larger air force that are now occupying the military minds. Morally Randolph and Reynolds are right, and they have gone far deeper into the relation of democracy and national security than any of the military men or the Congressmen have gone. What they are saying is that you cannot shunt aside the struggle for democracy on a plea of a national security emergency. For it is not the armed forces which can protect our democracy. It is the moral strength of democracy which alone can give any meaning to the efforts at military security.

On this score even a general who is unlike his fellow-generals—Dwight Eisenhower—showed a narrowness and blindness when he defended the current system of army segregation. Eisenhower is a former Chief of Staff, and he will soon be a university president, and he is a man whose mind is obviously on the move and whose social philosophy is in the making. I suggest to him very strongly that he go to school to those two Negro leaders, and that he can learn a few things from them about democracy which his military experience has not taught him.

We can all learn from them. And they in turn have learned something from Gandhi. We shall be adding up the total of the full effect of Gandhi's teaching for many years to come. On this score Gandhi taught two things: that nothing is more important than the moral conviction of an individual; and that in the face of the organized passive resistance to evil

—a resistance flowing from that moral conviction—no amount of violence or terrorism will ultimately prevail.

This is, in my memory, the first time that responsible Negro leaders, who are not playing the Communist game or being stooges for a strategy not their own, have talked out so clearly and unmistakably on so fateful an issue. I know that there are many other Negro leaders who feel that this goes much too far, and who regard the Randolph-Reynolds statement as a mistake. Yet I think there can be no question that Randolph and Reynolds come closer to the true feeling of the masses of American Negroes, in the North as in the South, than their more cautious and circumspect colleagues.

Something has happened to the American Negro in the era of the New Deal and of World War II, and it is something that will have to be reckoned with by those who are measuring forces in World War III. They have found a moral and political principle than can only be expressed in the words Thomas Wolfe once used: a principle

Whereon the pillars of this earth are founded,

Toward which the conscience of the world is tending—

A wind is rising, and the rivers flow.

That principle is, of course, the principle of a democracy which is not qualified by race or color or any other stupid irrelevance. It is idle to point to the undoubted fact that the position of the American Negro is slowly improving, that the injustice to him is being diluted, that the lynchings are fewer, that the discriminations are slowly being whittled away. You cannot answer a plea for equality by a half-inequality; you cannot answer a demand for justice by meting out injustice somewhat more carefully. Equality is a passion that feeds on itself. The taste of democracy becomes a bitter taste when

the fulness of democracy is denied. That bitterness has been increased by the hypocrisy we have shown in fighting racism abroad while we tolerate it at home. It has been increased by the experience our Negro GIs had when they were sent abroad, and found there were countries in which they were treated as human equals, and where the black badge of color did not blot out the red badge of courage. Democracy makes many claims, and talks very loudly about itself. It must also face the music, and pay the reckoning.

When Sen. Morse asked Randolph whether he would advocate mass civil disobedience if the Russians should attack us, Randolph's answer was a good one. He said there was still plenty of time for Congress to attack Jim Crow in the armed services before the Russians attack us. The whole idea of a Russian attack is under present conditions fantastic, and the tension of our relations with Russia has been used much too often to obscure issues of democracy as well as of peace.

I can add another answer to the one Randolph gave. The threat of civil disobedience undoubtedly weakens the military front we present to Russia; but what weakens us far more is the fact of racist discrimination. What the generals and Congressmen don't know—and even a liberal like Sen. Morse does not seem to know it—is that in its deepest sense World War III will be fought out all over the world as an ideological war. It is a naked struggle for power, but the weapons with which it will be fought will be ideological weapons.

And in such a struggle one of the real enemies within is Jim Crow. It is Jim Crow who will be committing treason, who has already committed treason. Think it over, senators and generals. Know the true enemies of democracy.

• Round-Up •

CONDUCTED BY CAREY MCWILLIAMS

OFTEN one hears it said that the status of racial minorities in America is influenced by the size of the minority, in any particular community, in relation to the "white" majority, the inference being that wider diffusion of racial minorities would in itself make for greater acceptance and integration. A study published in a recent issue of the *American Sociological Review* (October 1947) casts considerable doubt on the validity of this inference. Since 1890 the ratio of Negro to total population in Madison, Wisconsin, has been about the same—less than one per cent, which is much lower, of course, than the ratio of Negroes to total population in the nation. For over half a century, therefore, Madison has not been subjected to large influxes of Negroes or to sudden changes in its racial composition. While the men who conducted the study, Thomas C. McCormick and Richard A. Hornseth of the University of Wisconsin, concede that Madison is apparently a somewhat more congenial community for Negroes than the large urban centers with a large Negro population, there appear to be marked limitations to this congeniality. The Negro community of Madison still shows a higher rate of social disorganization than the white; little improvement is to be noted, by comparison with communities having a much larger ratio of Negroes, in housing or employment; and the usual pattern of residential segregation prevails. Despite the lower ratio of Negroes, the Negro population of Madison remains highly transient largely because of "meager economic opportunities." Nor has a relative freedom from Jim Crowism resulted in accelerated integration or in substantial im-

provement in living conditions. While this is a study of only one of numerous, small, "pocket-like," isolated Negro communities in the Middle West, it does cast serious doubt on the notion that "wide diffusion," per se, is likely to result in significant improvement in the status of Negroes.

The Chicago Council Against Racial and Religious Discrimination (123 W. Madison Street, Chicago 2) has issued an excellent pamphlet, "Discrimination in Higher Education" (15 cents), based upon an unedited reproduction of those sections of the six-volume report of the President's Commission on Higher Education which deal specifically with racial and religious minorities. The factual material in these portions of the report is so well known to readers of *COMMON GROUND* that its summarization here would be superfluous. However the report does emphasize some striking facts about discrimination in higher education. Enrollment of Negroes in institutions of higher education during the school year 1947 accounted for only 3.1 per cent of total enrollment, although Negroes represent approximately 10 per cent of the total population. Of particular importance is the fact that, of an estimated 75,000 students of Negro descent so enrolled, approximately 85 per cent were enrolled in 106 segregated institutions. The discrimination in higher education takes on a very sharp edge indeed in the graduate and professional schools: of 5,201 degrees granted by Negro institutions in 1940, 97 per cent were bachelor degrees, 3 per cent were masters, and 2 per cent were doctorates. In the academic year 1947, some

ROUND-UP

40,000 advanced degrees were granted in this country, of which Negro institutions accounted for 481 degrees, all of which were masters and none of which were doctorates. In unsegregated institutions, however, 8 doctorates (Ph.D.'s) were granted to Negroes. The Commission gets right to the heart of the problem of discrimination in graduate and professional schools by pointing out (p. 39 of the pamphlet) that "a substantial part of the blame for discriminatory practices on the part of the medical and dental schools belongs to the professional associations which tremendously influence the admissions policy of the individual institutions."

The Commission took an interesting position, in view of its representative composition, on the perennial question of whether discrimination reflects public attitudes or vice versa; or, as stated in the report, whether colleges and universities merely reflect rather than shape public attitudes. The answer of the Commission is that educational institutions, regardless of what position one may take on the theoretical question, should act as pioneering agents of leadership against discrimination. Nor were a majority of the members of the Commission alarmed by suggestions that discrimination in colleges and universities should be prohibited by state legislation. "Where assurance of good conduct in other fields of public concern has not been forthcoming from citizen groups," reads the report, "the passage of laws to enforce good conduct has been the corrective method of a democratic society. Extension of this method into the educational field with respect to discriminatory practices is, therefore, not only a defensible measure; it is also the logical next step" (emphasis added). As to private institutions, the report adopts the view that these institutions are, in some respects at least, accountable for their policies to the state and to the pub-

lic. With commendable realism, the report points out that "a universal mandate can be a helpful defense for admission officers against undue pressure of alumni groups and of professional associations which may attempt to influence admissions policies in order to maintain the character of an institution in accord with an established tradition. There is good ground for belief that a required removal of discriminatory criteria for the selection of students would result in a more diversified distribution of students from minority groups among all institutions, with a minimum of concentration in a certain few colleges and universities." Besides, as the report notes, a valid distinction exists between justifiable selection standards and selection criteria which include arbitrary discriminatory practices.

The pamphlet also contains the brief statement of dissent filed by four members of the Commission: Dr. Arthur H. Compton, Douglas S. Freeman, Lewis W. Jones, and Goodrich C. White. These dissenters insist that improvement of opportunities in higher education for members of minority groups must be "made within the established patterns of social relationships, which require separate educational institutions for whites and Negroes." Any other approach, they warn, would "threaten tragedy to the people of the South." Here, as usually happens, the southern educators are to be found in a position considerably to the rear in the parade of southern liberal opinion. For the Texas Council of Church Women—a "white" group—without a single dissent voted on March 3rd to endorse the President's Civil Rights Message.

Of the pamphlet material that I have examined in preparing this ROUND-UP, top billing must be accorded John Collier's excellent pamphlet, "America's Colonial Record," a publication of the Fa-

COMMON GROUND

bian Society, copies of which can be obtained from the Institute of Ethnic Affairs, 810 18th Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C. (36 pp. with a good bibliography). Mr. Collier surveys the history of American colonial policy and then devotes short, concise, pertinent chapters to the application of this policy, such as it is, in the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Alaska, the Pacific Islands, the Panama Canal Zone, and the Virgin Islands, and concludes with a chapter on American Indians. Here, in the compass of a short pamphlet, is to be found, in a most skillfully condensed form, the information that individuals and organizations interested in American colonial policy need to form opinion and to shape their own policy.

What Mr. Collier has to say about the "overpopulation" fallacy in relation to Puerto Rico is most significant. "In the case of Puerto Rico," he writes, "an obsession with the problem of population increase leads to despair." The birth rate cannot be forced down, so the argument runs, the death rate will not deliberately be forced up, and migration is impractical; so what can be done? Actually, as Mr. Collier points out, "population is only one among many factors, and must be looked at together with natural resources, social resources, and individual resources. Switzerland, Denmark, Malta, Rhode Island, New Jersey, are densely peopled, but not, therefore, desperate and poor. Palestine could be developed immediately so as to absorb another million of Jews. Cuba is not thought of as overpopulated, yet its family income is much lower than Puerto Rico's. . . . The fear of population pressure leads to an 'either-or' fashion of thought, which blots out whole regions of alternative possibilities." (This question is debated in the March, 1948, issue of the News Letter of the In-

stitute of Ethnic Affairs by Clarence Senior and Felix S. Cohen.)

The pamphlet also makes a strong argument in favor of statehood for both Hawaii and Alaska. In each case, Mr. Collier argues, the major problem is control of resources by absentee monopoly interests. For example, the tax structure in Alaska is incredibly primitive. The tax on gold, a major resource, is less than 3 per cent, and the first \$20,000 of gold mined is wholly tax exempt. There is no corporate income tax or personal income tax in the territory, nor is there any property tax outside the incorporated towns. The public utility tax is one-half of 1 per cent of the gross income. The fishing, mining, and transport interests have never paid any taxes in excess of 1½ per cent of the value of resources taken out of Alaska.

Mr. Collier also has some interesting comments on the famous "gold" and "silver" rolls of the Panama Canal Zone. (See George Westerman's "Gold vs Silver Workers in the Canal Zone" in the Winter 1948 COMMON GROUND.) Of 44,688 inhabitants of the Zone in 1945, 31,032 were employees of the Canal or the Panama Railroad. Of these 6,685 belonged to the so-called "gold-roll" and 24,347 to the "silver-roll"—designations which date from the construction of the Canal when skilled craftsmen, recruited in the States, were paid in "gold" and the unskilled native workmen were paid in Panamanian silver. To this day, generally speaking, "gold" means "white" in the Zone and "silver" applies to the natives and other dark-skinned residents. Wages as low as 25 cents an hour are still paid to some of the workers on the "silver-roll." It would be difficult to find an illustration which more clearly lays bare the real basis of social antagonisms than this symbolic designation of groups by the currency in which they are paid.

ROUND-UP

The major conclusions which Mr. Collier draws from this survey of American colonial policy—a model, to my way of thinking, of pamphlet-writing in the best Fabian tradition—can be briefly summarized. Whenever American public opinion has been fully and accurately informed about the problems of the dependencies, the response has usually been generous and sensible (more so, however, on political than on economic issues). But, due to the absence in the government of any single federal agency upon which responsibility might be fixed—if only the responsibility of keeping the public adequately informed—a general indifference has resulted in policy-by-default and a feeling on the part of the public that, for want of information, it is powerless to correct conditions of which it does not approve. Today responsibility for the dependencies rests only on Congress, and Congress, with its ever-shifting membership and its passionate preoccupation with the domestic vote, does not respond to pressures from the dependencies; its concern with them is sporadic, fitful, and usually irresponsible. In the absence of some such federal agency, the Institute of Ethnic Affairs, which Mr. Collier heads, has been carrying, without much assistance, the whole responsibility for informing the public about the dependencies, whereas this responsibility really should be fixed on the federal government. Through the *Guam Echo* and its own *News Letter*, the Institute of Ethnic Affairs has been keeping interested individuals and organizations fully informed about developments in the dependencies. Everyone aware of the problem must, therefore, feel a great sense of indebtedness to the Institute and to Mr. Collier for his brilliant leadership.

Individuals interested in the work of the Institute of Ethnic Affairs will also be interested in *Human Relations*, a new

quarterly journal devoted to studies looking toward the integration of the social sciences. The journal is the joint publication of the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations in London and the Research Center for Group Dynamics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge 38 (to which communications and inquiries can be addressed). While the studies are, for the most part, technical in character, the first two issues of the journal have contained some important generalized materials, notably an article in the first number by Dr. Theodore M. Newcomb on changing certain kinds of interpersonal attitudes, and an article by Dr. Melville Jacobs, in the second issue, on “Cultures in the Present World Crisis.”

Of materials dealing with anti-Semitism, *Commentary* (425 Fourth Avenue, New York 10) has recently carried several interesting and valuable articles. Gertrud M. Kurth's study of “The Complex Behind Hitler's Anti-Semitism” (January 1948) is an extremely convincing analysis of the roots of anti-Semitism in the arch anti-Semite of modern times. From the available evidence, Dr. Kurth manages to construct a most fascinating and plausible thesis on the origins of anti-Semitism in the personality of Hitler. Studies of this sort reveal both the strength and the limitations of the psychoanalytic approach to problems of social antagonism. Case histories of anti-Semites can shed a revealing light on the origin and the mechanisms by which prejudice functions in the individual; but, as Dr. Kurth notes, these same case histories throw little light on the nature of anti-Semitism as such, nor do they explain the devastating consequences of modern anti-Semitic movements.

In another article in *Commentary* (February 1948) Dr. Bruno Bettelheim,

in discussing "The Victim's Image of the Anti-Semite," makes much the same point that Saul Bellow has made in a recent novel, *The Victim*, namely, that in the phenomenon of persecution, persecutor and persecuted are inseparably interlocked. He also points out, and rightly, that it is dangerous to build up a stereotype of the anti-Semite for, in this manner, the issue tends to involve a clash between two stereotypes. To the extent to which psychoanalytic techniques and insights can develop, as they have shown promise of doing, a better understanding of the mechanism of persecution, they will make

it possible for us to see anti-Semites as individuals, not as stereotypes. Here again a limitation must be noted: it is important that we understand the anti-Semite if only for the purpose of being able to deal with him as an individual; but we will not acquire a knowledge of how to deal with anti-Semitism solely by a study of anti-Semites. Incidentally, the *Research Digest of Studies in Human Relations*, issued by the Anti-Defamation League (212 Fifth Avenue, New York 10), contains excellent summaries of important current studies in the field of human relations.

• The Pursuit of Liberty •

CONDUCTED BY MILTON R. KONVITZ

CALIFORNIA JAPANESE FISHING CASE BEFORE SUPREME COURT

IN 1945 the state of California amended the Fish and Game Code so as to forbid the issuance of a commercial fishing license to a person ineligible to citizenship and to corporations a majority of whose stockholders or any of whose officers are ineligible to citizenship. The constitutionality of this statute has been challenged by Torao Takahashi, who has been a resident of Los Angeles continuously since 1907, with the exception of the period of time when he was excluded from California under the military exclusion laws during World War II. Until his exclusion from the state, for close to 30 years he had earned his living by commercial fishing on the high seas and held a license from the Fish and Game Commission of the state of California. Yet because of the new statute, upon his return to California in October 1945, he found himself completely barred from his

employment by reason of the fact that under federal law he is an alien ineligible to American citizenship.

The California Supreme Court has upheld the constitutionality of the statute. On March 15 the United States Supreme Court agreed to hear an appeal through the issuance of a writ of certiorari. The petition for the writ of certiorari had the support of the United States Department of Justice, the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and other organizations.

According to the 1940 United States census, there are in the United States approximately 46,000 Japanese aliens ineligible to American citizenship, and of these approximately 33,500 were in 1940 residing in California. In addition there are approximately 1,000 other aliens ineligible to American citizenship. The case

THE PURSUIT OF LIBERTY

before the United States Supreme Court has an interest, however, that reaches beyond the aliens directly affected. The case again raises the question of the extent to which, under the Constitution of the United States, a state may adopt laws based on racial distinction. In the NAACP brief filed with the Supreme Court it is contended that the California statute was enacted at a time of strong anti-Japanese hysteria on the West Coast and was part of the campaign to thrust and keep out the Japanese aliens from California. The purpose of the statute was to effectuate a particular racial discrimination; it was rooted in racial, economic, and social antagonisms.

The brief argues that the United States government has sole jurisdiction to admit aliens into the United States. Once aliens are admitted, they are entitled to all constitutional guarantees which the Constitution affords to all persons regardless of whether or not they are citizens. It is also contended that the California statute violates the UN Charter, under which the government of the United States pledged itself to promote "universal respect for, and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinctions as to race, sex, language, or religion."

Since the UN Charter is a treaty, executed by the President and ratified by the Senate, it is part of the supreme law of the land which no state legislature may violate.

The UN Charter calls for the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The right to work is a human right and a fundamental freedom. The California law, by excluding Japanese aliens who are legally resident in the United States, from a common calling, denies them a human right and a fundamental freedom in violation of international undertakings of the United States.

A number of cases decided by the Supreme Court throw some light upon the constitutional problem involved in the Takahashi case. In 1876, in *McCready v. Virginia*, it appeared that Virginia had adopted a statute which prohibited anyone not a citizen of the state of Virginia from taking or planting oysters in two specified rivers. The United States Supreme Court held the act constitutional. The state, said the Court, owns the beds of all tidewaters, the tidewaters themselves, and the fish while running. The state has the right to say that the tidewaters and the beds are to be used by the people of the state, and only by them, as a common for taking and cultivating fish. This right of the state's citizens in the state's natural resources stems more from the institution of property than from the institution of citizenship. "It is, in fact, a property right, and not a mere privilege or immunity of citizenship." Citizens of other states are not entitled to share them.

In the *McCready* case the statute did not directly differentiate between citizens and aliens but only between citizens of Virginia and citizens of other states. In 1915, however, the New York Court of Appeals used this case as a precedent in a case involving the constitutionality of a statute prohibiting the employment of aliens on public works projects. The court took the position that aliens have no interest in the common property of the state, and so may not claim the right to share in that property on the same terms as those who have an interest. Aliens, though residents of the state, have no interest in the common property of the state.

These decisions are open to serious question. Does the citizen of the state make a direct contribution to the pool of natural resources? Does he put the little fishes into the rivers or into the

COMMON GROUND

ocean near the coast of the state? His only contribution is through taxes, and this contribution the alien, even if ineligible to citizenship, also makes. By paying taxes the alien, like the citizen, buys the enjoyment of all public facilities and property. Just as he may send his child to school for an education because he is a taxpayer, and just as he may enjoy the facilities and scenery of the public parks and reservations because he is a taxpayer, so, too, should he be permitted to share in the state's natural resources.

Despite the speciousness of the reasoning of the courts, a Washington statute which prohibits aliens from fishing in the waters of the state has been upheld; so, too, an Oregon statute with similar provisions; and a Florida act which required aliens to pay a \$10 license fee to fish in state waters while others were not required to pay a fee. There are now 33 states with statutes which discriminate against aliens or non-residents with respect to fishing, and 37 states discriminate against them with respect to hunting.

An interesting situation was considered by the United States Supreme Court in *Patson v. Pennsylvania* in 1913. A Pennsylvania statute prohibited aliens from killing any wild bird or animal except when the killing was in defense of property or person. The Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the act. Mr. Justice Holmes, in his opinion for the Court, said that the Court could not say that the legislature of Pennsylvania "was not warranted in assuming as its premise for the law that resident unnaturalized aliens were the peculiar sources of the

evil that it desired to prevent. . . ."

Apparently the evil that the legislators of Pennsylvania desired to prevent was the killing of wild birds or animals. Then why would the legislature distinguish between the killing of wild birds and animals by aliens and the killing of them by citizens? Was there any proof that aliens were more prone to kill wild birds and animals? Aliens, if not ineligible to citizenship, become citizens. Would they lose their desire to kill wild things on the day that they receive their naturalization certificates? It would seem that if the object were to prevent the killing of wild birds and animals, the legislature would adopt an act prohibiting such killing, without differentiating between the citizens and the aliens. Under the Pennsylvania act, if a citizen and an alien are in the woods together and the citizen kills two wild animals, he is not committing any crime; but if he kills one, and the alien kills one, only the alien can be arrested and punished. The citizen might kill a dozen birds or animals and the law will not touch him, but if the alien kills one wild bird, he is subject to criminal prosecution. One may fairly ask: did the Pennsylvania legislators have their eye on the wild bird or on the alien?

Now in the *Takahashi* case the United States Supreme Court has an opportunity to erase a good deal of the nonsense for which in part the Court has been responsible, and to declare in clear terms that the Constitution is color-blind and does not tolerate racist legislation of which the 1945 California statute is a typical instance.

• The Bookshelf •

CONDUCTED BY HENRY C. TRACY

BACKGROUNDS AND FRONTIERS OF HUMAN HISTORY

CIVILIZATION ON TRIAL. By Arnold J. Toynbee. New York: Oxford University Press. 263 pp. \$3.50

Arnold J. Toynbee, whose great work, *A Study of History*, has made him the world's leading analyst of civilizations past and present, follows it with a specific study of our own Western civilization and the challenge it must meet if it is to survive even one more half-century. His thesis in the *Study* was that these great cultural organizations, twenty in all since 4000 B.C., grew strong by meeting successive challenges; broke down when they failed to meet them. Each thought itself the one true civilization, all else being barbarian. Each believed itself the final order of society. None was, nor is, ours. Here he writes: "Civilization as we know it is a movement, not a condition; a voyage, not a harbor." True, ours has spread a network of trade and communication around the world, but it has not won the major part of humanity to its standard. It has not solved the problems of war and class which, unsolved, brought death to each extinct civilization. The crowning touch of this arresting work is that it locates the point at which we stand in a time-scheme of six thousand years of struggle and failure to found a world order in which class or race conflict and order by war should have been eliminated. By our incredible skill in making war the lethal thing it now is, and by our incredible folly in perpetuating class and race hate, we have imperiled not just our own civilization but all of humanity along with it. A way out is projected in this volume.

R. V. Coleman's *The First Frontier* (Scribner. \$3.75) derives its freshness from a unique interlocking of events (discovery, settlement, growth) on all margins of the New World frontier, and the vigor of a narrative splashed with color yet meticulous in historic detail. Events spaced thousands of miles apart are tied in with a main stream of action by French, English, Swedish, and Dutch settlers. With a vividly human approach, this work wins wide appeal and offers durable value. It is illustrated from rare old engravings.

Vera Lysenko's *Men in Sheepskin Coats* (Toronto. The Ryerson Press. \$3.50) is a story of mass migration. A quarter of a million Ukrainians found in the Canadian Northwest a true frontier, a belt of untouched prairie and brushland a thousand miles long, three hundred miles wide, and attacked it in the spirit of stout frontiersmen. Landless victims of Europe's overlords, they subdued the wilderness with bare hands, then earned and learned the use of farm machinery by which they gained leisure to form social organizations, revive their arts and crafts, express their sense of unity as a free people. Admirably told, this narrative leads to a report of notable achievement: integration of Ukrainian traditions, language-treasures, and folk arts into the creative life of Canada.

Marguerita Rudolph's *The Great Hope* (John Day. \$2.75) follows the fortunes of but one family (Jewish) trapped in the Ukraine during World War I, divided thereafter, only half of them ever realizing their hope of a better life in the New World. Those in the U.S. accept the Western way; those who stayed, the So-

viet; but the bond is not broken. Miss Rudolph's writing has appeared in *COMMON GROUND* from time to time, and CG readers will want to read this book.

Disruption by an earlier war ended more happily for the Rumanian family in Anisoara Stan's chronicle, *They Crossed Mountains and Oceans* (Wm. Frederick Press. \$3.75). Early chapters of the book tell of scenes and people in Transylvania with fresh feeling and a vivid sense of the values in peasant life. Dignity, integrity, love of the land, and artistic gifts are seen at their best on these ancestral farms. Believing that folk arts are the very soul and heart of a people—any people not born into a mechanized civilization—the author promotes plans for an ethnographic museum of peasant culture, for all groups making up our foreign-born minorities; not glass cases but folkcrafts in actual operation.

The Nationality Rooms of the University of Pittsburgh, text by John G. Bowman, Ruth Crawford Mitchell, and Andrey Avinoff, with 17 water colors and 46 crayon drawings by Andrey Avinoff and 2 etchings by Louis Orr (University of Pittsburgh Press. \$25) is a beautiful volume about the 17 classrooms various nationality groups living in or near Pittsburgh have given to the University. The story of the rooms and their significance to the community has already been told in *COMMON GROUND* (Spring 1946 issue), and this richly illustrated volume bears added testimony to the quality and permanence of the undertaking.

Race and Nationality as Factors in American Life, by Henry Pratt Fairchild (Ronald Press. \$3) goes on from a discussion of the difference between race and nationality groupings into a development of the thesis that "the United States has gone just about as far as it can safely go in permitting, in the name of humanitarianism and liberalism, the

dilution of its own nationality"—in other words, that American "nationality" will be weakened by further immigration. Here he represents the antithesis of *COMMON GROUND*'s point of view that this country has become great and strong and free precisely because it attracted to it throughout history the strength and potentialities of the freedom-loving people of the world.

Americans From Hungary, by Emil Lengyel (Lippincott. \$4), is another fine addition to the *Peoples of America* series, a story of liberty achieved through migration. Ravaged by Tartars, crushed by Turks, subjugated by the Hapsburgs, these brave folk almost won liberty under Kosuth but lost it by a Czar's intervention. Social revolution then took the form of mass migration of the victims of the rapacious land-barons. Deprived of the land they so passionately loved, peasants turned to mines and industries in America. Educated and gifted sons of Magyar and Jewish Hungarians fled, too, and theirs is the story of talent and genius flowering in exile, well told here. Besides notable contributions in science and engineering, their work has been outstanding in literature, art, music, and leadership—witness David Lilienthal, son of Hungarian-born immigrants, whose record every man knows.

Revolution by mass migration was impossible for the millions of China, but *Swords of Silence*, by Carl Glick and Hong Sheng-Hwa (Whittlesey House. \$2.75), tells of the part played by the few who could come to us, notably a peasant's son, Sun Yat-sen. This boy saw freedom here, dedicated his life to winning it for China, roused the secret societies of his homeland, organized them, and drove the Manchu dynasts from the imperial throne. The nature, history, and operation of these secret societies is told here, and their aim: for

THE BOOKSHELF

peace, and a rule that is neither Nationalist nor Communist but of and for the people of China.

Francis Butler Simkins in *The South, Old and New* (Knopf. \$6) covers the growth of southern sectional consciousness from its start in 1820 through the resultant clash of 1865 (seen as defense against northern intrusion); tells of the agrarian revolt that came later, of changing race relations, turbid politics, and allied aspects of social and political drama in which two opposed sets of custom and concept collided and no harmony was achieved. Suspicions and aversions remain; economic empire (northern) still galls. Yet liberalism grows.

A Southern Vanguard, edited by Allen

Tate (Prentice-Hall. \$4.50), collects essays, poems, and stories expressing the character of the South in its moods of aspiration and revolt: a blend of devotion to the South's ideals and of despair over the spiritual disorder that blights the land. Essays, deeply critical, strike a high point of vision, often transcend sectional unrest.

The Dixie Frontier, by Everett Dick (Knopf. \$4.50), is a vivid story of pioneer, planter, and slave migration over early trails or by wagon and flatboat later on. Enriched by fragments of old diaries and letters, the narration reveals motives of migration, ways of folk in movement, conditions of housing, health, thrift, schools, politics, and the start of industry and trade.

PREJUDICE UNMASKED

Carey McWilliams, in *A Mask for Privilege* (Little, Brown. \$2.75), draws on wide experience with minorities and discrimination in the United States. This book, his third in that field, is a study of anti-Semitism, its origin, motivation, and effects, and is as solidly built as a pyramid, and as pointed. He proves that the spread of this anti-social, anti-democratic virus is linked with the rise of predatory business and a new-rich class jealous in defense of a social status based neither on culture nor merit but linked with nationality and religion. Discrimination, in a pattern set by this pseudo-élite, spread to clubs and hotels first, then to educational and commercial centers, and has now become a political tool as well. This study shows a steady increase of myth-based prejudice from 1877 on.

All Manner of Men, by Malcolm Ross (Reynal & Hitchcock. \$3.50), deals with the long fight for equal opportunity, by

which is meant not "free enterprise" but equal chance for equal abilities. Such equality has largely been won for the white worker, but the late war found the Negro still shut out from vitally important industries. As chairman of the FEPC for three war years, Mr. Ross tells the inside story of that Committee's efforts in conferences with employers and meetings with union leaders. Fear of strikes was the main bar to success with employers. Though there was constant vilification of the FEPC by southern Congressmen, this chronicle demonstrates that white workers will respond favorably even when through sheer ignorance of the facts they first resist intrusion of Negro labor and threaten strikes. The stenographic report of a talk that won over prejudiced white workers from the Ozarks (pp. 75-78) is a fine illustration of how the Committee functioned.

Caste, Class, and Race, by Oliver C.

Cox (Doubleday. \$7.50) is as unorthodox a volume on race relations as has appeared in the U.S. No brief review here can do more than indicate the controversial nature of its material. The chapters on race brutally attack such conventional theories of race prejudice as that it is an outgrowth of ethnocentrism, or "in the mores," or a manifestation of caste. Dr. Cox sets up the social scientists in turn—W. Lloyd Warner, John Dollard, Gunnar Myrdal, etc.—and gives them battle. His own theory, Marxian but unorthodox, is that prejudice derives from economic exploitation and will be resolved only by revolution. Heavily documented, the book is provocative and stimulating even when the reader disagrees with it.

People vs. Property, by Herman H. Long and Charles S. Johnson (Fisk University Press. Cloth, \$1.50; paper, \$1), reports research on race-restrictive housing covenants; shows in detail the working of neighborhood associations, real estate agencies, and financial institutions in blocking areas of expansion for Negro housing. The book also reviews forms of legal relief available, and the overall prospect of frictionless adjustment if and when restrictions are abrogated. On the human and psychological side, the tone is liberal, informed, and wholly admirable.

Lost Boundaries, by W. L. White (Harcourt, Brace. \$1.50), is the true story of one American family as revealed to the author principally by one member, whom the shock of revelation that his parents

were part Negro, and "passing," hit the hardest. Popular and brilliant as a student, this youngster was demoralized to the point of psychoneurosis. Fear of the unknown (being a Negro) was cured by living in Negro communities. Full release, through acceptance and identification, was won later by telling his Dartmouth student friends that he was a Negro.

Herbert Aptheker, in *To Be Free* (International Publishers. \$3), a study in American Negro history, uncovers much that has been forgotten, ignored, or disavowed in events before, during, and after the Civil War. Tireless in research, this author has dug out letters, reports, official statements, and enactments of legislation that throw new light on the Negro's part in the fight for freedom and the course taken by white Northerners as well as Southerners to nullify what was won in 1865 and years following.

Edith J. R. Isaacs, as author of *The Negro in the American Theatre* (Theatre Arts. \$3.50), writes from close knowledge of her theme; she was editor of Theatre Arts magazine from 1919-1945 and has a long record as promoter of better theatre and as inspiration of new talent and fresh dramatic trends. Such was the new role for Negro actors, a break with the burlesque tradition, sparked by Ridgely Torrence in 1914. Build on a folk foundation, is Mrs. Isaac's advice. A complete story of the movement is here with data on actors, occasions, and authorship of plays.

LEADERS AND THE PEOPLE

Eagle Forgotten is the Centennial Edition (re-issue) of Harry Barnard's life of John Peter Altgeld, the German-born immigrant who became Governor of Illinois,

twice risking his political career because of his passionate belief in justice and civil rights (Duell, Sloan and Pearce. \$5). This is a forthright biography of the man and

his time. Inevitably, too, it is the political history of a period that saw bitter clashes in the struggle between newly organized labor and deeply entrenched industrial interests. Capital, then, even more than now, was backed by the law, the press, and the government, and when Altgeld pardoned the Haymarket Riot anarchists and when he stood up against President Cleveland in the case of the Pullman strike, he had to face the bitterest kind of vituperation and vilification. Barnard's book is an exhaustive account of these and every other major crisis during the career of this man of the people, who needs to be far better known by Americans generally.

Frank Kingdon's *Architects of the Republic* (Beechurst. \$3.50) discusses four of our greatest leaders: Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Franklin Roosevelt. In view of their length, the four biographies (averaging 70 pages each) are surprisingly complete, free of cant, yielding sane and sound estimates of what made these men national leaders. The tone and content have an unerring appeal for the lay reader. As an instance of the luminous line, read this on F.D.R.: "... the same gift as Jefferson for perceiving the truly democratic essence of every problem . . . much of Lincoln's gift for making issues come to life in the plain language of the people."

Heirs Apparent, by Klyde H. Young and Lamar Middleton (Prentice-Hall. \$3.75), invites comparison with Kingdon's book. Kingdon pointed out that great presidents have not been paragons, just human persons, but they did have, either as a gift, or they developed under stress, outstanding qualities of leadership. Of the thirty-four vice-presidents considered here (some of whom were later presidents), few had such qualities. Most appear to have been chosen as party favorites. The story of their lives makes instructive political history for 1948.

The Disruption of American Democracy, by Roy Franklin Nichols (Macmillan. \$7.50), carries a warning even more pointed and is the most arresting historical work on our list this quarter. Divisive attitudes that culminated in the Civil War formed a political pattern that is in danger of being repeated today. Professor Nichols' analysis of it gives us a clear picture of the forming of this pattern from 1856-61, the failure of leaders to restrain it or even to grasp the causes and perceive that our Union must be cultural as well as political. The same failure is apparent today, not only in our party leadership but in the counsels of the UN.

Karl Lehmann of New York University (Fine Arts Professor) brings to his study of *Thomas Jefferson, American Humanist* (Macmillan. \$4.50) a wealth of familiarity with classical arts and philosophies, a deep knowledge of the humanist tradition; so that the Jefferson we may have thought of chiefly as a leader and founder of the democratic tradition becomes a new figure, drawn on a far larger scale. The conception of cultural unity (lack of which, in leaders after Jefferson, led to the tragic events of 1861 and a rift still unhealed) is broad as humanity, extensive as time. This man conversed with the ancients. Their writings "furnished him with experience extended beyond his natural range." Yet who was more alive to the immediate issues of his day, more adept at meeting them?

Democracy and Progress, by David McCord Wright (Macmillan. \$3.50), deals with a conflict between two opposed ideas of human welfare and how to assure it. One calls for a static order of government and a fixed social pattern, no dissent allowed; the other is flexible, provides for growth or change, fosters a free creative spirit in all fields. In favor of the second form, the author discusses both from the point of view of a social economist.

Carl Van Doren's *The Great Rehearsal* (Viking. \$3.75), a day-to-day story of the making and ratifying of the Constitution of the United States, points the parallel between 1787 and 1948, shows how the arguments for and against a federal system and the sharp struggle in which the Constitution was ratified bear on UN problems and world government now. The body of the book is occupied with that fateful contest: whether we should remain only a confederation of sovereign states or be-

come one nation. Application of the moral is left to the reader.

Henry A. Wallace's *Toward World Peace*, a small but compact book (Reynal & Hitchcock. \$1.75), is the statement of what he stands for and believes in. By the daily press we are kept "informed" on what Wallace is and thinks, yet we read but four pages of his book and find that much of this has been misinformation. It is only fair that we learn from the man himself what his views are.

A COMMON GOAL FOR FAITHS AND RACES

While Mordecai Kaplan writes of the *Future of the American Jew* (Macmillan. \$6), his forecast includes a plan that applies to all minorities, with a common goal for all groups in a pattern of diversity and a framework of democratic freedom. That goal is self-fulfillment of each member of society through an inner freedom won only when the distinctive values of his or her group are recognized. For his own group he predicts that this can be attained through unified effort and the founding of true communities, the purpose of which is "to make the collective spirit of the group and its accumulated cultural resources contribute to the self-fulfillment of every one of its members." A sense of the wholeness of humanity pervades this deeply discerning book.

Contributors to a symposium, *The Christian Way in Race Relations*, edited by William Stuart Nelson (Harper. \$2.50), agree that Western Christianity has failed to live up to its creed, almost ceases to be a moral force in the world, and harbors even within its churches social attitudes neither Christian nor ethical in any sense. In hope of a reawakening, they stress such imperatives as right rela-

tions across race lines. They agree that current treatment of the Negro is denial of the churches' creed; that the gospel of success has become a quasi-moral ideal, and personal complacency a dominant trait. They look to active organizations outside the churches, but allied with them, to spearhead a renewal in the Christian way. But one finds no hint here that the Christian way ties in with any broad cultural plan like that of Dr. Kaplan.

One finds in Abram Vossen Goodman's *American Overture* (Jewish Publication Society. \$3) proof that cultural values were recognized, locally, in colonial times. Catholic, Lutheran, and other dissenting sects are in the scope of this survey of testings of civil and religious liberties. Surprisingly, concessions to Jews first breached the Puritan citadel of intolerance. A Yale president went beyond "tolerance" to positive cultural and social relations. The causes of retrogression since that day will be found fully disclosed in Carey McWilliams' *A Mask for Privilege*, reviewed elsewhere in this issue.

The Price of Liberty, by Nathan Schachner (American Jewish Committee. \$3.50), tells of forty years of active effort by a

THE BOOKSHELF

Committee formed solely to protect the rights of Jews in all lands. Its record of unsparing effort in actual relief measures, in the diplomatic field, and in countering dollar-diplomacy, is impressive. Controversial issues have been avoided. The American Jewish Committee has always opposed any plan to set up a separate political enclave for the Jews; regards the fight for liberty as an American problem and a world problem in which the fate of democracy is involved.

Bartley Crum, in a foreword to Helen Warren's *The Buried Are Screaming* (Beechhurst. \$3), justifies the title and adds: "The buried are not always below ground. Sometimes they roam the earth." Miss Warren, with the use in Italy before, and in Germany after, the war ended, found such living dead—displaced persons, once Poles, or something else, but now only Jews, seeking a home and finding none—denied the only hope that could bring them back to life: the hope of Palestine. Here is an incandescent report of what the young actress found in Europe, written with charm, high spirit,

sensitivity and—where possible—humor. It adds up to this: the policy of treating these harried survivors of hate as Poles, Hungarians, Austrians, etc., in order to "repatriate" them, has grossly and cruelly miscarried. Repudiated and still hated by other nationals, they are a homeless minority whose fate must rest heavy on the conscience of the world until a just solution is found for their grievous problem. They are Jews. And what does that mean?

Milton Steinberg, in *Basic Judaism* (Harcourt, Brace. \$2.50), provides the answer. His concise and lucid book (172 pages) is written as much for non-Jews as for Jews, since they, the world over, desperately need to understand a business so cogent that the peace of the world may any day be wrecked as a result of misunderstanding. Simply and directly the author explains what Judaism is as a civilization and as a religion; why it elicits such intense and sustained loyalty; he shows proof of a liberalism toward other faiths "almost unique in western theology." Of social and cultural aspects, too, it is a fine interpretation.

FICTION IS NOT MAKE-BELIEVE

Joseph Auslander and Audrey Wurdemann together wrote *My Uncle Jan* (Longmans, Green. \$2.75). Steeped in Czech tradition, they tell of the high-spirited band who brought to a "New Bohemia" in Wisconsin the vitality and élan of their homeland. Here the spice and flavor of living—songs, dances, worship and humor—come fresh as the kuchen, buchty and bunte schuessel they take hot from their ovens.

Zelda Popkin's *Small Victory* (Lippincott. \$2.75) deals with a people who dwell in a broken land, still nursing the

seeds of their defeat. But the story is concerned less with the problem of the Germans than with that of Americans there to help them. It turns on the clash between Professor Barlow, civilian idealist, and the American Military Government, in the matter of displaced persons, Jewish, asking admission to German universities. "Take a little when you cannot get all" is the lesson he learns before he can win a "small victory." A revealing story and a novel of the first order, not without a love-interest, finely felt.

In Astrid Valley's *Marching Bonnet*

(Macmillan. \$2.50) "Mama" is the idealist. From a town in Sweden where her father has died a drunkard, she comes to America to join a Bowery corps of the Salvation Army and battle for the souls of sailors. Too vivid for hearsay, the tale could have been written by Mama's daughter. But, if so, it is Papa (of the story) she takes after; for he loved books and travel, as does the author, while the mother feared learning as a threat to holy ardor. With dialogue so "Englished" as to preserve the quaint formality of a Swedish idiom, there is much charm in the telling of this immigrant story.

Hallam Tennyson's stories in *The Wall of Dust* (Viking. \$2.50) tell what One World is like to an Italian American officer looking up his natal village and folk of the Mazzese; to American Negro soldiers stranded in Italy; to an English Jew on reaching Palestine—and so on. Startlingly vivid and with a clairvoyant reading of minds, these are written by a driver in the Friends' ambulance unit who is also great-grandson of the poet and distinguished in his own right for brilliant work with the pen.

Merle Miller's *That Winter* (William Sloane. \$3) tells what their world looked like to young veterans who returned from war in 1945 and stayed in and around New York City; who were uprooted, like those Scott Fitzgerald wrote about in the 1920s, frustrated, aimless, groping for something, they don't quite know what. They all intend to think this thing out, but never get around to it. Miller writes of his novel, "I had to get it down, the way it was, what people said and did and thought . . . after the war ended, the winter we got home."

In Mary Jane Ward's novel, *The Professor's Umbrella* (Random House. \$3) there are crosscurrents and postwar troubles, but the nuances are positive. Something can be done. A college classroom

(Midwestern) comes instantly to life in these pages, with a young English instructor, capable, popular, but beset with petty annoyances which, piling up, break open and reveal an in-group attitude and prejudice imbedded in the heart of the administration. Discovery that the instructor is a Jew—a fact never concealed by him, but that went unnoticed—results in framed-up charges and a causeless dismissal. There are repercussions: prestige of the college is lowered, standards are degraded, morale worsens. But the instructor, released, wins true freedom and awareness of his vocation. At the close, there's another winning, not unconnected with a quite sober yet pleasantly humorous encounter with a kindred spirit, on a rainy night, under the "professor's umbrella."

A hundred years ago, in K'aifeng, China, there was the remnant of a Jewish colony, with a few families still holding to race and faith while most of them had merged with the Chinese. This is the historic basis of Pearl S. Buck's new novel, *Peony* (John Day. \$3). In one such family there is a bondmaid, bought in childhood as a playmate for the young son of the house, destined to be a preferred servant of the house when grown, and so trained. Demure, dutiful, and a beauty, she plays the part; conceals the fact that, long intimate as a companion, she loves the son. For her, a bond servant, there's no hope there. But can she free him from the unwanted marriage about to be forced upon him by his strong-willed mother? She will risk all to win for him that release. Besides spirit and charm, Peony has it from her people that all under Heaven are one family. She embodies that belief. Her creator writes, "How she will be liked in this country of ours where so much depends on color and creed, I do not know. With considerable curiosity I wait to find out."



MY UNCLE JAN

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS PHOTOS

NEW CITIZENS ARE SWORN IN in Federal Court in Chicago.

A GROUP BEING NATURALIZED in New York listening to the judge addressing them.

CHARLOTTE BROOKS-MONKMEYER



HUNGARIAN-BORN MRS. MARY ZRTUCHA is now an American citizen in western Pennsylvania.

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A SEVENTY-SIX-YEAR-OLD NEW CITIZEN signs her naturalization papers in New York.

CHARLOTTE BROOKS-MONKMEYER



BORN IN STUTTGART, Germany, 11 years ago, Hermann Kurz came to the U.S. with his mother in December 1947 and is now learning English in the Pittsburgh public schools.

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AT FORBES SCHOOL IN PITTSBURGH, Mrs. Hannah Freundt specializes in teaching young immigrants the English language. The job is done mainly through visual education.



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NEW CITIZENS BEING SWORN IN IN PITTSBURGH. Right hands raised, they renounce allegiance to their home country and take the oath of allegiance to the United States.